



ECHO LAKE

ENTERTAINMENT

MOTHER

Screenplay by
Michael Lloyd Green

Story by Grant Sputore &
Michael Lloyd Green

Developed With The Assistance of
ScreenWest & Lotterywest

THE PENGUIN EMPIRE
PO Box 524
Leederville, WA 6902
+61 8 9476 9977
michael@thepenguinempire.com

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FADE IN:

INT. NUCLEAR BUNKER - SPINE CORRIDOR - DAY

A spartan, subterranean shelter. Its decaying bones repurposed and given a high-tech facelift.

MUFFLED EXPLOSIONS rumble in the distance as --

We CREEP DOWN a corridor -- lit by exit path markings -- TOWARD a dark room where tiny lights twinkle like neon stars.

We PUSH THROUGH its doorway and into --

INT. CONTROL ROOM - SAME

-- an unmanned computer bay. Consoles BLIP and blink as monitors activate, onscreen data scrolling unreadably fast.

INT. WAR ROOM - SAME

Rusted lighting flickers to life in a gutted plotting room, unequipped except for a disused conference table and chairs. On the far wall -- a glass door to an INFIRMARY.

We PUSH THROUGH cascading dust -- unsettled by each BOMB PERCUSSION -- TOWARD a "docking station": a throne of knotted cables, upon which sits --

MOTHER -- a humanoid robot with a gunmetal musculature of pistons and gears -- slowly raising her head.

CLOSE ON MOTHER'S "EYE" blinking on in a succession of vertical LEDs, forming a dotted ribbon of light at the forefront of her muzzle-shaped skull.

She untethers from cables, dangling from ceiling ports.

INT. LABORATORY - DAY

A scientific workspace with glassed chambers and annexes.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Mother withdraws an embryo tank -- releasing Nitro gas -- from a metallic cryo pod.

A test tube spins in a centrifuge.

A dropper squirts liquid into a culture plate.

Mother's robotic hand inserts the plate into an incubator.

INT. LABORATORY - CRYO BAY - LATER

A mechanized library of glass cannisters. Mother *CLICKS* one into a claw-like receptacle, activating a timer.

She stares at the cannister's contents: a floating fetus -- umbilical cord fed into rubber tubing.

INT. SPINE CORRIDOR - DAY

Mother sits erect on a bench. Waiting expectantly.

The MUFFLED EXPLOSIONS fade. The dust settles. All goes quiet.

A STEADY BEEP carries down the hall, drawing her attention.

INT. CRYO BAY - MOMENTS LATER

Mother opens the developed baby's canister like a bassinet and cuts through a veined membrane with a laser scalpel.

Amniotic fluid empties from the sack, revealing her new DAUGHTER -- crying and slathered in goo.

Mother picks up the human child in her clutches and cleans her tender flesh with a cloth.

INT. WAR ROOM - NIGHT

Seated at her docking station, Mother raises the infant to her chest -- where a plate retracts -- exposing a silicone nursing device to which the newborn instinctively latches.

CLOSE ON MILK flowing through a tube, exposed between the steel flanks of Mother's torso.

WIDE ON MOTHER nursing Daughter beneath a dim bulkhead light.

INT. LABORATORY - NURSERY - NIGHT

Daughter CRIES offscreen while Mother reaches into a closet of vacuum-sealed supplies, withdraws a bag labelled: "ONE SOFT TOY." As she tears it open, a small stuffed bunny expands.

She returns to Daughter's bassinet. Quiets her with the toy.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL an immense grid of empty bassinets, dwarfing the lone newborn.

INT. WAR ROOM - DAY

Now a toddler, Daughter sits in Mother's lap -- face smeared with applesauce -- while Mother feeds her at the repurposed conference table. Mother picks up a napkin.

CLOSE ON MECHANICAL HAND wiping food from Daughter's chin as the toddler's hand grips Mother's index finger.

INT. SPINE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Mother paces -- patting Daughter's back -- with the infant suspended from a retractable baby bjorn in Mother's chest.

INT. WAR ROOM - DAY

A crayoned portrait of Mother and Daughter hangs amid a collage of childish drawings on the wall, the militaristic room more lived-in and hospitable.

Daughter, five years old, sits across from Mother at the conference table. Mother picks up construction paper and -- in an inhuman blur -- manipulates it into an origami turtle.

Daughter grabs matching paper, attempts to mimic Mother's handiwork, folding her piece end-over-end.

She displays her crumpled creation with a contagious smile.

INT. BARRACKS - NIGHT

Wearing pyjamas, Daughter sits on the top mattress of a bunk -- clinging to her bunny -- as she fixates on countless rows of bunks lining both sides of an *immense dormitory.

Mother tucks Daughter into bed. Remotely turns off the lights. As she turns to leave, Daughter grabs her wrist. The child's scared expression says all Mother needs to know.

Mother eyes the myriad empty bunks. Looks back at Daughter, who silently pleads.

**PRODUCTION NOTE: dorm scale represented via matte painting.*

CUT TO:

INT. WAR ROOM - NIGHT

Mother positions Daughter's bunk in a corner of the WAR ROOM, across from the docking station.

She helps Daughter climb into bed. Taps a screen on her wrist, darkening all but a single light above the hall exit.

DAUGHTER
Goodnight, Mother.

Mother lays a cold hand on Daughter's cheek.

MOTHER

Goodnight.

Mother settles into her nearby docking station.

Daughter watches while sipping from a thermos. Rolls over and closes her eyes in peace.

INT. WAR ROOM - DAY

Daughter wakes before Mother. Starts to play with her bunny but quickly bores. She looks around, unsure what to do. Then climbs down from bed and approaches Mother -- still tethered.

Curious, Daughter fiddles with the cables plugged into Mother's shoulders. Runs her hands up the fiberoptic tendrils.

She stares at Mother for a beat. Risks a whisper --

DAUGHTER

Mother...

Mother doesn't stir.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

Mother, are you awake?

A single LED glimmers in Mother's eye. Then runs up and down the dotted ribbon of lights like a rhythmically bouncing ball. Daughter greets her with a tentative wave.

The dot goes dark. Mother's head lowers.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

I can't sleep anymore.

(off silence)

Can you at least turn the lights on?

Getting nowhere, Daughter crawls into Mother's lap. Walks her fingers along Mother's shoulders and arms, examining her complexity.

She notes several illuminated bars in the side of her head, denoting an incomplete battery charge.

She gently touches Mother's face when --

The room lights up. Daughter beams as Mother addresses her in a soothing monotone:

MOTHER

Have I made you happy, Daughter?

DAUGHTER
I'll be happier if you come play.

MOTHER
There'll be time for that after I
finish my sleep cycle.

Daughter expels a HEAVY SIGH.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
Find a story to read. I'll be
finished shortly.

Daughter remains in Mother's lap, combing over her chair.

DAUGHTER
Why don't you ever sleep in the
bunk with me?
(off silence)
I'll let you have the top.

MOTHER
Those beds are for children. Like
you. This is where mothers sleep.

Daughter jiggles Mother's tethers.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
Careful.

Mother hoists Daughter off her lap. Sets her down.

Frustrated, Daughter shuffles back to the bottom bunk.
Hunches on the edge of the bed, staring down at her bunny.

Mother watches. Waits a beat, then --

Unplugs her tethers and goes to her child. The mattress bows
as Mother takes a seat next to Daughter.

DAUGHTER
How come there aren't more
children, Mother?

MOTHER
There used to be. Before the wars.

DAUGHTER
Wars?

MOTHER

They're like arguments. Only instead of talking to resolve conflict, many humans resorted to killing one another to get their way.

DAUGHTER

Is that why I can't go outside?

MOTHER

You can't go outside, Daughter, because nothing survived.

(beat)

The air is unsafe.

DAUGHTER

Humans did that?

MOTHER

Yes.

Daughter studies the lights of her eye.

DAUGHTER

I don't want to be a human, Mother.

MOTHER

When steered properly, they can be wonderful.

Daughter eyes her bunny.

DAUGHTER

Then why'd you only make one?

Mother stares at Daughter for a long beat. Stands and extends her hand. Daughter hesitates before taking it.

INT. LABORATORY - EMBRYO BANK - MOMENTS LATER

A thick door opens -- *TSHHH* -- revealing Daughter, slack-jawed at Mother's side, peering into a chilled chamber at --

-- a host of cryo pods lining the floor.

Mother takes Daughter's hand, inviting her in like a parent welcoming their child into a restricted room for grown-ups.

They walk between the rows of pods. Daughter points to one --

DAUGHTER

My brothers and sisters are in those?

MOTHER

Would you like to meet them?

Daughter feverishly nods. Mother hands her gloves, a face shield and rubber apron.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Now, it's important that you wear these anytime the pods are open so you don't hurt yourself. The liquid in these cannisters is very cold. Here...

Mother helps Daughter tie her apron. Waits for her to put on the gloves and mask. Then unlatches a pod -- releasing nitrogen gas -- and withdraws an embryo tank.

Daughter gapes at its collumned compartments.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

They're small now. But one day they'll be as big as you.

DAUGHTER

When?

MOTHER

When the time is right.

DAUGHTER

It's not right now?

MOTHER

Not yet.

DAUGHTER

Why couldn't we be born together?

MOTHER

Because, Daughter... mothers need time to learn. Raising a child, a good child, is no small task.

DAUGHTER

But you're a great Mother.

MOTHER

That's very kind.

DAUGHTER

Do you think you'll be ready soon?

MOTHER

Perhaps.

Mother extends her hand.

Daughter remains fixated on the embryo-rich pods.

DAUGHTER
And then we'll be a family?

MOTHER
We are a family.

DAUGHTER
(re: pods)
A big family, I mean.

MOTHER
Eventually.

Daughter takes Mother's hand. Bursting with excitement.

INT. WAR ROOM - MORNING

YEARS LATER. Daughter, nearly 17, pale and thin, hair squared at her shoulders, slowly rouses in her top bunk.

CLOSE ON DAUGHTER'S EYES blinking awake. A lasting, hollow stare. Interrupted by the CLATTER of silverware.

Her head rolls to the side to find Mother plating breakfast at the nearby conference table.

Daughter looks back at the ceiling. SIGHS.

INT. WAR ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Daughter sits alone in the middle of the long table, silently eating loose corn. Da Vinci's Last Supper minus the disciples.

Mother enters, reaches to take Daughter's empty plate when her mechanical wrist locks, its GEARS WHINING.

DAUGHTER
What's wrong?

Mother pries at her wrist, forcing it to bend. Flexes her stiff fingers. Daughter grows concerned.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
How long's it been like that?

MOTHER
It's fine.

DAUGHTER
Mother...

Daughter takes her plate.

INT. WAR ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Mother sits at her docking station while Daughter lubricates her joints with an oil can. Mother moves her wrist with ease.

Daughter sets a hand on Mother's shoulder. Pecks her cold cheek as she exits toward the hall.

INT. BARRACKS - DAY

A PIANO SOLO plays from a tablet computer in a corner of the dorm -- its disused bunks rearranged to accommodate Daughter's ballet practice.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Daughter does barre work on a rusted pipe along the paint-chipped wall.

She progresses through her port de bras. Focused. Fluid.

Framed by bunks, she loses herself in the graceful steps and catlike twirls of a petit allegro dance.

Sweat-soaked, Daughter towels off. Chugs back a thermos.

In the middle of the room, she pirouettes, attacking each with the precision of a machine --

-- DAUGHTER POV: the room spins with stomach-churning speed, each rotation more aggressive than the last.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Austere. Desks in long rows. Wearing monochrome fatigues, Daughter sits front-and-center, flanked by empty seats.

Distracted, she gazes off-screen.

Mother stands at the front of the classroom, pointing to a smartboard. ONSCREEN: an illustration of five sickly people, clustered on the left-hand side.

MOTHER

Suppose a doctor has five patients.
All in need of different organ
transplants. Without these organs,
his patients will die. However, no
compatible organs are available.

ONSCREEN: a lone sickly person enters on the right-hand side.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

One day, a man enters the doctor's office with a life-threatening condition. Upon doing blood-work, the doctor discovers this man is a perfect organ match for all five of his patients. If the doctor treats him, he will save one life but lose five. If he does nothing, one person dies but saves five. What is the doctor's best course of action?

Daughter remains focused on something off-screen.

DAUGHTER'S POV THROUGH GLASS WALL

Endless rows of desks extend uniformly through adjacent glass-walled classrooms like parallel train tracks (*PRODUCTION NOTE: scope achieved via matte painting*).

MOTHER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Daughter...

MOTHER

remotely frosts the glass wall. Daughter snaps to.

DAUGHTER

Course of action? I guess... none?

MOTHER

And why's that?

Daughter stammers.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

What is the fundamental axiom posited in A Fragment on Government?
(off stare)
Did you do your reading?

DAUGHTER

Some.

MOTHER

Was it too difficult?

DAUGHTER

...maybe?

MOTHER

We can select a different text. However, your birthday is rapidly approaching and it would be unfortunate if your scores failed to meet the projections from last year's examination.

(beat)

But you set the pace, Daughter.

DAUGHTER

Bentham's fine.

MOTHER

Alright then...

(beat)

The fundamental axiom suggests that the doctor is morally obligated to minimize the pain of the greatest number possible.

DAUGHTER

Right.

MOTHER

Now consider that you're the doctor. And also the only organ match for your patients. What then is the right choice?

DAUGHTER

According to whom?

MOTHER

I'm asking you.

DAUGHTER

I mean, Compte says we're supposed to live for others, right? To sacrifice if necessary. So...

MOTHER

And do you agree?

Daughter hesitates.

DAUGHTER

Not entirely.

MOTHER

Elaborate.

DAUGHTER

Well, do I know these five patients? Are they good humans? Smart, dumb, lazy or hardworking? I, a life-saving doctor, might be giving my life for people who are murderers or thieves who end up harming more people due to my sacrifice.

(beat)

I can't really answer the question.

MOTHER

Doesn't every human have an equal right to life and happiness?

DAUGHTER

A murderer shouldn't have the same rights as a doctor. No.

MOTHER

I detect frustration. At what point did I agitate you, Daughter?

DAUGHTER

You didn't. It's just... nevermind.

MOTHER

I didn't mean to alarm you about your exam. The fact is, it's more a test of my competence than yours.

(beat)

You'll do fine, Daughter. You always do.

CUT TO:

LATER

Daughter traipses toward the classroom door. Downcast, lost in thought. Mother taps her wristpad.

MOTHER

Daughter...

Daughter stops in the doorway. Doesn't look back.

DAUGHTER

Yes?

MOTHER

I see you haven't logged many hours in the simulator this week.

DAUGHTER

I know.

MOTHER

Some vitamin D would be good for you.

DAUGHTER

I know, Mother.

Daughter exits, carrying her computer tablet and thermos.

INT. SIMULATION ROOM - DAY

We SLOWLY PUSH ACROSS a body of water TOWARD the back of Daughter, who sits on a bench in the middle of a placid lake. A concrete island with no bridge or boat in sight. Blue UV lights glowing overhead.

INT. WAR ROOM - NIGHT

Mother sleeps in her docking station while Daughter lies in her bunk, wearing pyjamas. Her wall shelf populated with a menagerie of paper animals.

She absentmindedly makes an origami dog while watching an episode of The Tonight Show on her computer tablet.

CLOSE ON SCREEN: Johnny Carson shakes a contestant's hand as --
Dust falls onto the tablet computer.

Daughter eyes a crack in the ceiling. Squints hard. Confused.

DAUGHTER'S POV

A cockroach CHITTERS out of the narrow opening. Then stops.

DAUGHTER

springs up. Wide-eyed at the sight of the foreign critter -- seen only in textbooks. Studies it with rapturous curiosity.

CLOSE ON ROACH scurrying -- FEET CLICKING -- across the ceiling, then down the wall.

Daughter frantically unscrews her thermos -- swigs the last drops -- and quietly climbs out of bed in pursuit.

She ensures Mother's not looking. Follows it across the floor and into --

INT. SPINE CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

-- the darkened hallway where she scrambles to keep up with the fleeing insect. The roach pauses just long enough for Daughter to lunge -- and miss trapping it with her thermos.

She lunges again. Misses. The roach barely evading capture, scuttling several metres down the corridor to a dead end.

Daughter has it cornered.

DAUGHTER
(whispering)
Got you now.

She goes in for the catch just as --

The roach slips through a crack under the wall. Daughter kneels, looks into the crevice. Sees a faint red light.

Probing the opening with her finger, she discovers the wall is thin and loose -- a false panel.

She hooks her fingers beneath it and tugs, prying back the panel until she's able to squeeze her small body into --

INT. EMERGENCY ESCAPE TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

-- a hidden passageway, lit by exit path markings and red lights with arrows. Stacked boxes line the tunnel walls.

Daughter opens one, discovers canned goods inside. She's entranced by the unfamiliar surroundings, until --

-- the roach catches her eye as it beelines toward the provisions, stopping shy of a gap between two boxes.

Daughter creeps toward it -- thermos outstretched -- tip-toeing down the reddened tunnel. Pounces and traps her prey.

She tightens the thermos lid. Holds it up to the light, examining the rare specimen inside. Her eyes wide with wonder.

She taps the jar --

DAUGHTER
Hey, little guy.

DAUGHTER'S POV

The roach crawls up the side of the thermos. RACK FOCUS to a glowing "EXIT" sign.

DAUGHTER

lowers the thermos. Peers down the tunnel. And cautiously follows the arrow deeper into the unknown.

INT. SPIRAL STAIRCASE - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter nears the end of the corridor, stops at the base of a staircase -- its railings marked with luminous guidestrips -- winding upward and out of sight.

She steps onto the stairs. Looks back down the tunnel. Too far down her rabbit hole to go back now.

CLOSE ON DAUGHTER'S HAND gripping the railing. She takes a second step. Then another -- spiraling around -- feeling her way through the darkness -- rising four stories until --

She passes through an opened blastdoor and into --

INT. LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

-- a changing room that dead-ends at a sealed AIRLOCK.

Daughter scans the cramped quarters, eyeing an oversized locker -- affixed with timeworn radiation and biohazard decals.

Desperate to glimpse something -- anything beyond the bunker -- she cups her hands to the airlock's vision panel, peers into --

A DECONTAMINATION CHAMBER, walls fitted with head-to-toe showers. Across the airlock, she spots --

A blastdoor marked: "EMERGENCY EXIT." Its porthole window blackened by night.

Dejected, she slumps against the airlock door, studies her new pet, tapping the thermos to get its attention. Her face washed in the red glow of an exit sign.

CUT TO:

INT. WAR ROOM - MORNING

CLOSE ANGLE ON THERMOS landing hard on the conference table as Daughter presents the roach to Mother, who drops a pre-packaged breakfast onto a mess plate and --

-- SNATCHES the thermos, examining the critter inside.

MOTHER

Where did you find this?

DAUGHTER
It was crawling around.

MOTHER
In here?

Daughter nods.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
Did you touch it?

Daughter shakes her head.

DAUGHTER
Do you think it could be from
outside?

MOTHER
That's highly unlikely.
(beat)
But a risk we can't take.

Mother marches the thermos out of the room. Daughter at her heels.

INT. VENTILATION PLANT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mother crosses a mechanical room, crammed with HUMMING HVAC EQUIPMENT and HISSING BOILERS. A web of rusted pipes overhead.

Daughter panics as Mother barrels toward -- an incinerator.

DAUGHTER
Wait, if it's survived, maybe the
surface is safe now.

Mother opens its cast iron door. Ignites flames -- *WHOOSH*.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
Shouldn't we at least check before --

Mother deposits the thermos into the incinerator, arresting Daughter in her tracks. Daughter stares at the withering plastic, her hopes lost in the fire.

Mother turns to her. Notes Daughter's crushed expression.

MOTHER
You're disappointed. That's
understandable. But I must remind
you that my measurements are sound.
Surface contamination levels remain
hazardous. For you...
(MORE)

MOTHER (CONT'D)
 and all the unborns who will one day
 call this their home.
 (beat)
 I'm sorry, Daughter.

Daughter stands like a misplaced statue in front of the incinerator as Mother pivots and returns toward the hall.

INT. WAR ROOM - LATER

Mother scrubs the floor with a push broom and lye soap. Daughter watches from the hall, barred from entrance by an invisible line at the doorway.

DAUGHTER
 How much longer?

Mother stops. Assesses her progress.

MOTHER
 I still have to do the other side.
 (off frustration)
 We can't be too careful with
 something like this.

DAUGHTER
 What am I supposed to...

Daughter looks down the hall. An idea brewing.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
 What time is it?

MOTHER
 Six forty-seven. Why do you ask?

DAUGHTER
 ...I'll be in the dormitory.
 (beat)
 I haven't practiced today.

Satisfied, Mother continues scrubbing the floor.

INT. BARRACKS - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter turns on her computer tablet. Scrolls down a list of songs -- selects Bach's BRANDENBURG CONCERTO NO. 3 IN G MINOR: ALLEGRO -- and cranks up the volume.

SMASH TO:

INT. CROSS CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter dashing down a hall, the MUSIC carrying over --

INT. SPIRAL STAIRCASE - TRACKING SHOT - MOMENTS LATER

-- Daughter's FEET PATTERNING up the fully illuminated stairs -- excitement ramping -- her smile widening with each step -- faster and faster -- as she whisks into --

INT. LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

-- the changing room outside the airlock. Daughter slows to a halt at the sight of --

A shaft of sunlight piercing the dusty air like a beacon, blasting from the exit door.

Daughter extends her hand into the light, feels the sun's warmth for the first time. Waves her fingers through it. Captivated by the intense brightness.

She cups her hands to the airlock's vision panel, only to find the exit's porthole glared and opaque with grime.

She considers the airlock release.

A sign reads: "WARNING: FOR USE BY AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY. AIRLOCK REQUIRES TWO MINUTE PURGE TIME IN A CONTAMINATED ENVIRONMENT. OPEN/CLOSE WITH CARE TO AVOID INJURY."

She takes a final look through the glass. Drags herself back to the stairs, descending a couple steps before --

Glancing back at the rusted locker, her curiosity piqued.

She scurries into the room. Pops open the locker, revealing --

Shelves of CBRN suits, stacked like lifeless bodies.

Daughter examines a gas mask.

INT. CROSS CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter hurries toward the barracks, MUSIC louder with every step when suddenly -- all goes quiet.

She tears around a corner, halts upon finding Mother -- back turned -- in the BARRACKS doorway down the hall.

Daughter spots a "RESTROOM" sign across the corridor. Dashes for the bathroom door. Opens and shuts it just as --

Mother turns to face her. Daughter swallows hard.

MOTHER

You left your music playing.

DAUGHTER

I was going right back. Just had to use the bathroom.

MOTHER

Where are your pyjamas?
(off look)
From last night.

DAUGHTER

Oh, um... in the laundry, I think.

A beat. ON MOTHER. Unreadable.

MOTHER

(attempting humor)
That's a first.
(beat)
I was beginning to think you forgot where the laundry was, Daughter.

Daughter forces a grin.

Mother gently touches Daughter's shoulder as she passes and makes her way down the hall.

Daughter releases a long-held breath.

INT. WAR ROOM - NIGHT

Daughter sits alone at the conference table. Eyes closed. Mother enters, sets something in front of her.

MOTHER

You can look now.

Daughter opens her eyes to discover a wrapped present.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Happy birthday, Daughter.

Elated, Daughter grabs the gift.

DAUGHTER

Can I open it?

Mother nods. Daughter wastes no time. Tears off the wrapping and pries open the box to reveal -- a bagged set of new cotton pyjamas -- identical to her others.

Daughter deflates, slowly removing them from the packaging.

MOTHER

Do you like them?

DAUGHTER
Are they the same... ?

MOTHER
I had to dispose of your others.
But I know they were your favorite.

Daughter sets them on the table. Eyes Mother, who watches her expectantly. Daughter quickly masks her disappointment.

DAUGHTER
They're great, Mother.

She stands to embrace Mother's hulking frame.

INT. WAR ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter eats across from Mother, whose effort to keep Daughter company is undermined by her inability to share the meal. Daughter's CHEWING the only sound while Mother observes.

Daughter sets down her fork, stares at her nearly-full plate.

MOTHER
Would you like me to heat it more?

Daughter shakes her head. Takes a bite, averting her eyes.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
Something is troubling you.

DAUGHTER
I'm just not that hungry.

MOTHER
You know you can talk to me,
Daughter. About anything.

Mother eyes the bagged pyjamas on the table.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
I can get you a different color.

DAUGHTER
It's not that.

MOTHER
Then what?

Daughter tries to bite her tongue. But fails, leveling steely eyes on Mother --

DAUGHTER

What if you're wrong?

(beat)

Your measurements or... how would you know if you don't go outside?

MOTHER

Doing so could make me a hazard to you. I'd have to be destroyed.

(beat)

Are you unhappy here?

DAUGHTER

No but...

MOTHER

I want you to be happy, Daughter.

DAUGHTER

I am. I just think...

Daughter hangs her head. Mother reaches across the table, gently lifts Daughter's chin and holds her gaze.

MOTHER

Have you ever known me to be mistaken?

Daughter softens, shakes her head.

INT. WAR ROOM - NIGHT

Daughter lies waiting in her bunk. Turns toward the docking station where Mother sleeps. Whispers --

DAUGHTER

Mother?

No response. She withdraws a torch (flashlight) from beneath her pillow and climbs down the bed's metal frame -- SQUEAKING with every movement.

As her socked foot reaches the bottom rung, Daughter slips and drops the torch -- *THUNK!*

Paralyzed, she watches as it rolls toward Mother -- closer and closer until --

-- the torch slows to a stop, centimeters shy of clanging into the docking station.

Daughter collects herself. Pads across the room to retrieve it, each carefully placed step a risk.

She slowly squats to grab the torch. Confirms that Mother's still sleeping. And backs out of the room.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Daughter hastily wriggles her legs into the pants of a CBRN suit. Tugs suspenders over her shoulders.

She pulls on a gas mask. Her BREATHS FILTERED as she shuts the locker and ventures toward the airlock with her torch.

Daughter stops in front of the sealed door with the ambivalence of an astronaut preparing to jettison into space.

The room's exit signs glow red as if in warning.

She flashes her light over a sign that reads: "AIRLOCK SAFETY PROCEDURES." Scans the instructions, noting: "IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, AIRLOCK DOOR WILL AUTOMATICALLY RELEASE."

Daughter places a hand over the airlock switch. Closes her eyes, steeling herself. Takes a deep breath when --

TING, TING -- metal faintly taps the exterior blastdoor.

She bristles. Unblinking.

TING, TING, THUNK -- the door THUDS -- nearly flooring Daughter in shock.

Her filtered breaths heave hard and fast, fogging her mask. She rips it off. Cups her hands to the vision panel when --

BOOM! -- BOOM! -- BOOM! -- the pounding intensifies.

Daughter backs away, glances over her shoulder. Deliberates a beat before -- unsealing the airlock -- *TSHHHH.*

Heart jacking, she presses through the doorway and --

INT. DECONTAMINATION CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

-- edges toward the BANGING blastdoor into a beam of moonlight -- punching through its porthole.

DAUGHTER

Hello?

The outer door stills. Daughter presses her ear to it. Silence.

She peers out the muddied glass when --

A shadow blocks the moonlight, darkening the grated window.

She looks back at the locker in the changing room.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter tosses a CBRN suit into the airlock. Closes it behind her and stares at the emergency exit release.

A sign reads: "EMERGENCY EXIT: ALARM WILL SOUND IF DOOR IS OPENED."

She takes a deep breath and -- unseals the blastdoor -- triggering a DEAFENING ALARM -- WAAH-WAAH-WAAH!

INT. WAR ROOM - SAME

CLOSE ON MOTHER'S EYE lighting up. She yanks free of her tethers, explodes out of her wiry throne.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - SAME

Daughter watches a rawboned female DRIFTER, late-30s, stagger into the airlock like a feral dog, wearing mudcaked rags, clutching her hip. Red lights flashing. SIRENS WAILING.

Drifter drops a satchel. On edge. Flinches as the BLASTDOOR SHUTS and DECON FILTERS WHIR. Fingers twitching at her side.

Through the vision panel, she squints at Daughter. Both studying each other as if viewing something alien.

DAUGHTER

I need you to put on that suit.

Drifter kicks at the CBRN gear, inspecting it. Cautiously surveys her surroundings.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

We don't have much time. You want inside, you'll put it on. Mask and all.

DRIFTER

...huh?

Drifter peels her hand from her bloody shirt. Shakes her head.

DAUGHTER

Sorry. But that's the only way.

Drifter stares at the suit. Baffled. Notes Daughter's resolve and... begrudgingly winces her way into the pants.

Daughter's attention flits from Drifter -- to the flashing lights -- back to the airlock as --

Drifter zips the CBRN jacket over her tattered threads.
Debates the gas mask. Then pulls it on, MUFFLING her voice --

DRIFTER
(re: door)
What you waitin' for?

PUSH IN ON DAUGHTER peering over her shoulder.

DAUGHTER
Mother.

Concern grips Drifter.

INT. SPINE CORRIDOR - SAME

Mother storms toward the loosened wall panel, accelerating like a train out of its station.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - SAME

Daughter agonizes, fixating on the stairs.

Drifter PALMS the glass.

DRIFTER
She'll lemme in though?

A beat.

DAUGHTER
Not sure.

DRIFTER
Not sure?

Drifter totters. Devastated. Leans on the chipped-tile wall.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)
I won't make it out there 'less...
what if she didn't know? I could
keep outta sight...
(pleading re: wound)
Lemme see to this, I'll be on my way.

Daughter scurries to the stairs. Peers into darkness below.

INT. EMERGENCY ESCAPE TUNNEL - SAME

Mother steams down the strobing red tunnel -- SIRENS BLARING --
her metallic feet a blur -- KA-DUNK, KA-DUNK, KA-DUNK.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - SAME

Daughter glances at the airlock -- finds it empty -- and scrambles to the viewing panel to see --

Drifter unconscious on the floor.

Panicking, Daughter eyes the locker, notes two empty racks -- big enough for bodies. Deliberates -- and opens the airlock.

INT. SPIRAL STAIRCASE - SAME

Mother clambers up stairs -- walls echoing metal-on-metal -- *CLANG, CLANG, CLANG* -- up two flights before bulling into --

INT. LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

-- the dressing quarters, where Daughter stands alone in front of the opened airlock. Gas mask in hand.

DAUGHTER

I only opened it for a second.

Mother retrieves the mask --

MOTHER

Did you think this decomposing relic would keep you safe?

DAUGHTER

I didn't go outside.

Mother scans the area, head swiveling with a MECHANICAL WHINE. She silently stalks the room.

Daughter eyes the locker -- cracked ajar -- Drifter's suited body narrowly visible on a shelf beneath other CBRN suits.

She shuffles in front of it. Sleeves sweat from her brow as --

Mother nears the locker. Nudges past Daughter and CREAKS open one of its rusted doors.

Daughter leans against the other locker door, concealing Drifter's head and torso.

Mother pokes at an empty suit.

MOTHER

I should have destroyed these years ago.

(turning on Daughter)

(MORE)

MOTHER (CONT'D)

But that does not excuse your disregard for my authority and the safety of the others in this facility.

DAUGHTER

Others?

MOTHER

(re: embryos)

Your family.

Daughter sighs. Eyes Drifter's booted feet on the bottom shelf, quickly swallows her frustration.

DAUGHTER

(placating)

You're right, Mother. As always. My actions were impulsive and...

Though stern, Mother touches Daughter's face with concern.

MOTHER

And very dangerous.

DAUGHTER

It won't happen again.

MOTHER

No. It won't.

Mother closes the locker. Points to the door leading to the bunker stairwell.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

From now on, that door is to remain sealed at all times.

She turns away.

Daughter spots Drifter's bag in the open DECON CHAMBER and -- seals the airlock. Blocks the viewing panel with her body as --

Mother faces her.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

I hope you show better discretion than this on your exam tomorrow.

DAUGHTER

Tomorrow?

MOTHER

Did you forget?

DAUGHTER
Can't we reschedule?

MOTHER
To accommodate your disobedience?
(beat)
I suggest you get to sleep,
Daughter. It's going to be a long
day.

Mother ushers Daughter toward the exit. Daughter glances back at the locker.

INT. CLASSROOM - MORNING

Mother sets a tablet computer in front of Daughter -- sleepy-eyed at her usual desk, atop which sits a thermos.

Daughter skims the first exam page on the tablet.

CLOSE ON TEST, divided into sections: "CRYO PRESERVATION" -- "EMBRYO THAWING" -- "FETAL DEVELOPMENT." Equipment diagrams and flowcharts beneath each.

MOTHER
You'll have sixty minutes to
complete the first portion of your
exam. If you finish before I
return, you can read your book.

DAUGHTER
Where are you going?

MOTHER
I have lab work to complete. And
must see to the airlock.

Daughter sits up.

DAUGHTER
What for?

MOTHER
To ensure the area wasn't
contaminated last night.

Daughter motions to the exam --

DAUGHTER
What if I have questions?

MOTHER
Skip any you don't understand and
I'll assist you when I get back...

Mother eyes a wall clock that reads: "8:00."

MOTHER (CONT'D)
...at nine o'clock.

Mother CLUNKS toward the door. Daughter panics.

DAUGHTER
Mother...

Mother cranes around. Daughter swallows hard.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
There's something I need to tell
you. I meant to last night. But I
didn't want to concern you.
(beat)
I found something. In the outer
sector.

MOTHER
Another cockroach?

Daughter stares at her thermos. Remembering. Eyes unblinking.
She raises her gaze to Mother. Forces a nod.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
Where is it?

DAUGHTER
I got rid of it. Outside.

MOTHER
Is that why you opened the door?

DAUGHTER
I didn't want you to hurt it.

A long silence.

MOTHER
I appreciate your honesty.

Mother turns to leave. Stops in the doorway.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
You must remember that everything I
do is to protect you, Daughter.

Mother exits and closes the door behind her.

Daughter grimaces. Waits a beat. Then bolts to the door,
poking her head into the hall.

DAUGHTER'S POV

Mother disappears around a corner.

DAUGHTER

glances back at the TICKING CLOCK. Slips out the door in the opposite direction of Mother.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The stairwell door SQUEAKS open. Daughter pokes her head into the room, staring at the closed locker.

DAUGHTER

Hello?

No response. Daughter skirts past the locker to the airlock. Peers inside, spots the satchel on the ground.

She holds her breath and -- in one motion -- opens the DECON CHAMBER -- swipes the satchel -- seals the door. Gasping.

She unfastens the bag. Looks inside to find -- a hand cannon.

Wary, she tucks the gun into the back of her pants -- covering it with her shirt -- and approaches the locker with the tentative steps of a bomb squad tech.

She grips the locker handles and -- cranks them, leaping back.

The doors open, revealing Drifter on a bottom shelf. Immobile.

Daughter watches her from a distance. Squats to find the woman's masked head hanging sideways, looking out.

Awestruck, Daughter ventures a whisper --

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

Hey... we have to go.

Drifter doesn't budge. Daughter leans in to inspect. Peers through Drifter's clouded mask to find her eyes closed.

Hesitant, Daughter gently touches her arm. No movement. Emboldens and gives her a firm shake when --

Drifter awakens with a start, SMACKING her head into the shelf above -- sending Daughter stumbling.

Drifter rolls off the shelf, onto the floor. Slumps against the locker for support.

Neither moves as they size each other up.

Drifter eyes a thermos in Daughter's hand. Reaches for it like a beggar, hands trembling.

Daughter closes the gap between them. Cautiously hands it over when --

Drifter notices her satchel hanging from Daughter's shoulder. Violently grabs it and glares. Unhinged.

Daughter lets go. Backs away.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
You dropped it.

Drifter stares at the bag for a long beat. Then at Daughter.

DRIFTER
You get antiseptic?

Daughter shakes her head.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)
Nothing? No bandages?

DAUGHTER
I will.

Drifter huffs.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
But I need you to come with me.

Drifter brushes off Daughter. Starts to remove her gas mask.

Daughter grabs her wrist --

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
No, wait!

DRIFTER
It's okay.

Drifter loosens Daughter's grip. Daughter relents, dumfounded.

Drifter removes the mask, her knotted hair cascading over her shoulders as she raises the thermos to her cracked lips -- full in a way that might have been attractive in another life.

DAUGHTER
How're you unaffected?
(off blank stare)
By the contagion. Outside.

Drifter scrutinizes Daughter. Shakes her head.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

What?

DRIFTER

Who put that in your head? Your mum?

A beat on Daughter. Unsettled.

DAUGHTER

...she's wrong?

DRIFTER

Think you two need to have a long chat.

(beat)

Where's she now?

Daughter clocks the stairs.

DAUGHTER

Can you walk?

Drifter fires a derisive look.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

I'll help.

Drifter groans. Considers the exit.

SMASH TO:

INT. SPINE CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter straining to shoulder Drifter down the main hallway when -- Drifter stops, hunches over. Hands on her knees.

DRIFTER

What is this place?

DAUGHTER

Shhh.

Daughter nervously checks behind them. Peeks around a corner.

No sign of Mother.

She flings Drifter's arm over her shoulder and tugs.

Drifter shakes her head -- pleading -- starts to slip down the wall when --

CLUNK, CLUNK, CLUNK -- faint thuds carry down the corridor.

DRIFTER

Hear that?

Daughter shifts into overdrive. Yanks Drifter off the wall, the woman cringing with each movement as --

Daughter humps Drifter's dead weight across the hall into --

INT. VENTILATION PLANT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

-- the machine room. Shuts the door. Guides Drifter to a dark corner in the back and sets her behind a GRUMBLING GENERATOR.

Drifter slumps on the ground, gripping her hip. Daughter lifts the thermos to Drifter's mouth. Sets it by her side.

DAUGHTER

(whispering)

Will you be okay until I get back?

Drifter watches the door. Baffled.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

I won't be long.

Daughter awkwardly pries away. Catches herself and extends a welcoming hand like Johnny Carson.

DRIFTER

That noise down the hall... that your mum? The hell's she doin'?

Daughter further extends her hand --

DAUGHTER

You're supposed to shake it.

Drifter considers Daughter's hand. Halfheartedly obliges. Daughter grins ear-to-ear, retreats around a wall of pipes.

CUT TO:

DAUGHTER

cracking open the door to the main corridor, peering through the opened sliver to find --

Mother tramping toward her.

Daughter shuts the door, braces her back against it.

CLOSE ON DAUGHTER

breathless, eyes clenched, sweat snaking down her brow as --

Mother passes outside. Her HEAVY STEPS FADING.

Daughter braves another peek, watches Mother disappear into the concealed tunnel, leading to the airlock.

SMASH TO:

INT. INFIRMARY - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter riffling through drawers in a white-walled room, surrounded by robotic medical equipment.

She pockets pill bottles, gauze, hydrogen peroxide. Scours cabinets until she finds --

A field surgical kit.

Daughter glances at a clock that reads: "8:22" and -- backs into a jar, toppling it to the ground -- CRASH!

She stands aghast, surrounded by a sea of shattered glass.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - SAME

Mother opens the locker of CBRN suits to find --

The bottom shelf empty.

She turns toward the airlock, looks back at the empty shelf. Processing. Then strips the locker of the remaining bio-gear.

INT. INFIRMARY - SAME

Daughter races to sweep broken glass into a dustpan. Stiffens like prey in the path of a predator, hearing an unsettling --

CLUNK, CLUNK, CLUNK -- approaching in the distance.

She scrambles to finish sweeping and -- trips over the dustpan, spraying shards across the floor.

CLUNK, CLUNK, CLUNK -- growing louder and LOUDER until --

Daughter looks up with a start.

DAUGHTER'S POV - THROUGH GLASS DOOR

Mother carries a heap of CBRN suits past the doorway of the adjacent WAR ROOM -- in direct line of sight.

DAUGHTER

drops to all fours behind the exam table. Instantly recoils, leaving a smear of blood on the white floor.

She inspects her hands -- speckled with glass -- and extracts a shard from her palm, gritting through the pain.

INT. VENTILATION PLANT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Drifter compresses her wound in the shadows, head hung and sweating when --

The DOOR GROANS.

DRIFTER
(sotto)
Thank God.

CLUNK, CLUNK, CLUNK - steel feet stamp down a narrow aisle.

Drifter pulls herself up, peers between dripping pipes.

DRIFTER'S POV

Mother deposits the bio-gear into the flaming incinerator.

DRIFTER

ducks out of sight. Horrified. Flips open her satchel --

No gun.

She fumes, fishing in the dark for a weapon. Grabs a lead pipe and cowers in the corner.

INT. INFIRMARY - MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE ON Daughter's gauze-wrapped hand, emptying the dustpan of glass, discarding bloody paper towels.

The clock reads "8:37."

She surveys the spotless floor. Collects the medical supplies.

INT. SPINE CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter reaches for the PLANT ROOM door, finds it ajar. She scans the quiet hall before nudging into --

INT. VENTILATION PLANT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

-- the din of DRUMMING MACHINERY. She shuts the door behind her. Surveys the maze of metal -- vast yet claustrophobic.

Daughter presses through aisles of industrial tubing -- peeking around every corner. Wary of the shadows.

She rounds the generator where she left Drifter.

The woman is gone.

Concerned, Daughter backs away. Turns around as --

Drifter barrels out of the dark, pipe in hand. Grabs Daughter.

DRIFTER
Where's my shooter?

DAUGHTER
I don't know.

DRIFTER
It was in here!

Drifter shoves her satchel at Daughter, who drops it.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)
I need it. Now.

DAUGHTER
Why?

Drifter angrily points at the door --

DRIFTER
You got a droid?

DAUGHTER
("shit")
Mother was here?

Drifter shifts. Stares confused. Peers under a pipe to check the doorway.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
I can't stay...

DRIFTER
Look, I'm gone. Just gimme the gun.

Daughter shakes her head.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)
They'll kill me. That whatcha want?

DAUGHTER
Who?

Drifter points to the door --

DRIFTER
Dozers like that.

A beat on Daughter. Shaken.

DAUGHTER
There're more like Mother?

Drifter impatiently huffs.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
Why would they hurt you?

Drifter snaps, points to her wound --

DRIFTER
Cuz that's what they do. Been damn
good at it.

Her words settle in Daughter's gut like a brick. Daughter masks concern.

DAUGHTER
Mother would never...

DRIFTER
Where's the gun?

Daughter swallows, backs away. Drifter lurches toward her.

INT. CLASSROOM - SAME

Mother flings open the door. On mission. Finds Daughter's desk empty. The wall clock reads: "8:52."

She tramps to the desk, flips through the untouched exam.

INT. VENTILATION PLANT ROOM - SAME

Drifter backs Daughter into a corner. Picks up her satchel.

DRIFTER
I'm not leavin' without it.

Daughter presents the medical kit like a gift.

DAUGHTER
I brought you this.

Drifter reaches for it. Daughter pulls it away.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
You should sit.

DRIFTER
I'll sit when I'm clear of here.

DAUGHTER
You won't get far unless --

Drifter snatches the kit. Extends her hand.

DRIFTER
The shooter.

MOTHER (O.S.)
(down hallway)
Daughter?

Daughter springs off the wall. Drifter white-knuckles her pipe. Both watching the door through the grid of tubes.

INT. SPINE CORRIDOR - SAME

Mother searches the corridor -- head scanning to and fro -- past the PLANT ROOM.

MOTHER
(calling out)
Daughter?

INT. VENTILATION PLANT ROOM - SAME

Daughter scurries past Drifter to a clearer vantage point, leans over to peek around the generator, exposing --

The hand cannon tucked into her pants.

Drifter strains for it. Daughter pushes back, guarding the gun.

Drifter KNOCKS her into pipework. Detains Daughter's flailing arms, inadvertently pinning them to a hot boiler --

DAUGHTER
Owww!

Drifter seizes the gun. Daughter CRIES OUT.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
MOTHER!

INT. SPINE CORRIDOR - SAME

Mother cranes toward the PLANT ROOM.

SMASH TO:

INT. VENTILATION PLANT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mother BARGING into the corroded belly of the bunker. She stalks down a darkened aisle, relief valves COUGHING STEAM.

DRIFTER

Hides behind the generator -- gun readied -- clasping Daughter's mouth.

MOTHER

charges through the HISSING haze. KA-DUNK, KA-DUNK, KA-DUNK.

MOTHER
(calling out)
Daughter? Where are you?

CLOSE ON DAUGHTER'S UNBLINKING EYES.

Drifter sternly shakes her head, warning her when --

Daughter bites Drifter's hand.

Drifter stifles a SCREAM, releases Daughter.

MOTHER

zeroes in, thundering toward the PAINED CRY.

DRIFTER

whips around the generator into the walkway to find --

Mother closing in like a tank.

Drifter braces, unloading two slugs -- BOOM! BOOM! -- one to Mother's chest, another to her outstretched hand.

Mother falters. Rips the gun from Drifter, pins her to the generator. Mother's hand tight on Drifter's throat when --

Daughter leaps from the shadows, grabs Mother's arm.

DAUGHTER
Wait.

Mother cocks her head at Daughter.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
Don't. Please. She's just scared.
(signaling Drifter)
Right?

Drifter's eyes betray her contempt.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
A droid hurt her, Mother. Badly.

Mother examines Drifter's bloodied hip. An unnerving beat.
The lights of Mother's eyes narrow.

MOTHER
(to Daughter)
I heard yelling.

Daughter locks eyes with Drifter, who silently pleads.

DAUGHTER
I burnt myself. That's all.

Mother presses into Drifter's face.

DRIFTER
(choking)
I'll leave. Right now.

DAUGHTER
She can't, Mother. Not in her
condition.

MOTHER
No. Of course not.

Mother loosens her grip. Drifter lurches forward, SUCKING AIR.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
You should have informed me of this.

DAUGHTER
I was afraid you'd turn her away.

MOTHER
I'd never turn away someone in need,
Daughter. But your secrecy could
have cost her life. We need to get
her to the infirmary.

Behind Mother's back, Drifter's eyes flare. She frantically
shakes her head at Daughter, who picks up the woman's satchel.

Mother peels Drifter off the generator, muscling her away.
Drifter glares back at Daughter.

INT. INFIRMARY - MOMENTS LATER

Mother ushers Drifter to the exam table.

MOTHER

Please remove your clothes and lie
down.

Drifter stands in place. Eyes the door as Daughter enters,
blocking the exit.

Daughter sets the medical kit on a tray. Mother busies
herself at a counter. Sets down the gun.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

You can go now, Daughter.

DAUGHTER

But --

Mother silences her with a look.

Daughter exits. Watches through the WAR ROOM's glass door.

While Mother is preoccupied, Drifter stares at the gun -- out
of reach. Spots a door keypad, shuffles toward it.

Mother opens a drawer, revealing -- a syringe and cannula.

MOTHER

(back turned)

This droid that shot you, how far
was it from here?

Mother draws fluid into the syringe.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Were you followed?

Drifter taps the touchscreen. To no avail. Stares at Daughter
through the glass. Daughter stares back. But not at Drifter...

RACK FOCUS TO Mother's reflection right behind Drifter.

Drifter swings around -- finds Mother holding the syringe --
and startles to the ground -- scurrying on all fours --
TOPPLING EQUIPMENT in her wake.

EXT. WAR ROOM - SAME

Daughter mashes a hands-free intercom switch by the INFIRMARY
door. Yells into the speaker --

DAUGHTER

Mother.

A screen above the intercom blinks red: ACCESS DENIED.

INT. INFIRMARY - SAME

Daughter yells in vain, beating the soundproof door outside.

Mother CLUNKS toward Drifter. Slows to a stop.

MOTHER

Your wound's likely infected.
 (re: syringe)
 Without Penicillin, any other
 measures will be useless.

Mother sets the syringe on the medical tray. Eyes a blood smear across the floor.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Every second you don't trust me,
 you're losing more blood. I know
 you're frightened. But you have no
 need to be.

Mother steps forward. Drifter grabs an IV stand like a broadsword. Eyes ablaze, bearing teeth.

Mother gives her space. Studies her as if she were a specimen in a petri dish. Motions to her wound --

MOTHER (CONT'D)

When did this occur?
 (beat)
 Were you alone? If there are
 others, they could be in danger.

DRIFTER

From a virus?

Mother eyes Daughter, who's clearly disconcerted.

MOTHER

What have you told my daughter?

Drifter squirms. Looks out the glass. The rattled teen watches like a child hanging on the movements of a caged animal.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Do you see the way she's looking at
 me? And you wonder why I've guarded
 her from certain realities.

(beat)

Contrary to your understandable
 assumptions, my primary directive
 is to care for humanity.

(beat)

(MORE)

MOTHER (CONT'D)

If I wanted you dead, all I'd have
to do is leave.

Drifter clutches her hip, her breathing labored.

DRIFTER

Don't lemme keep you.

Mother unzips the med kit, revealing a scalpel, forceps,
hemostats, sutures. Sets gauze and antiseptic on the tray.

MOTHER

If you won't let me help you, at
least help yourself.

(beat)

I trust you know what you're doing.

Mother looks out the door. Daughter backs away as if from a
stranger. Mother hangs her head, contemplative, then --

-- tramps back to the hand cannon. Grabs the gun.

Drifter dives behind the table.

Mother eyeballs her -- a trembling and easy target -- then
picks up the syringe.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

I can't force you to take it. But I
strongly recommend you do.

She opens the hermetic door and exits, sealing it behind her.

INT. WAR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mother emerges. Shares a silent beat with Daughter.

MOTHER

Daughter...

(beat)

I'll give you a moment.

Mother brushes past her, marches the gun down the hall.

Daughter stares into the INFIRMARY at Drifter -- trapped
behind the glass, clutching her bloody hip.

SMASH TO:

INT. CROSS CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter on Mother's heels, Mother not slowing to engage.

DAUGHTER
Aren't you going to help her?

MOTHER
I tried.

DAUGHTER
We can't leave her like that.

MOTHER
She has all she requires.

DAUGHTER
What was she saying?

Mother abruptly turns into the LAB.

INT. LABORATORY - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter impatiently watches Mother open a clear lift-door on an overhead cabinet, compartmented like safety deposit boxes.

Mother stows the gun in one of the cabinet's slotted drawers.

A metal bit shutters out of her damaged forefinger like a retractable fingernail.

She closes the cabinet. Locks it with her finger.

DAUGHTER
Did you know?

Mother takes a moment. Turns to face Daughter and reaches for her bandaged hand --

MOTHER
What happened?

Daughter hugs it to her side.

DAUGHTER
Nothing.

MOTHER
You're bleeding.

DAUGHTER
Did you know there were people up there?

MOTHER
I'm as surprised as you.

Daughter eyes Mother. Skeptical.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
 I was designed as a fail-safe,
 programmed to activate in case of
 human extinction.

DAUGHTER
 Fail-safe?

Mother motions to the embryo bank --

MOTHER
 To give humanity a second chance.
 One that began with you, Daughter.

Beat.

DAUGHTER
 And your surface data? The toxicity
 levels?
 (accusatory)
 That part of your programming too?

Mother points Daughter toward a chair. Daughter doesn't budge.

MOTHER
 I'd hoped to tell you, myself.

Daughter holds back angry tears.

DAUGHTER
 You lied to me?

MOTHER
 I told you the surface was
 dangerous. And it is. If you'd
 feared the same danger in our home,
 how could I have raised you?
 (beat)
 I hope you see that I'm governed by
 different parameters than her
 assailants. That I'm a good Mother.
 (off silence)
 Have I ever done you harm?

Eyes averted, Daughter shakes her head.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
 We can talk more later if you like.

Daughter looks up at Mother.

DAUGHTER
 What do they want?

MOTHER
I wish I knew, Daughter.
(off look)
Perhaps our guest can answer that.

Daughter sighs. Stares into the hallway, concerned.

DAUGHTER
How long does she have?

MOTHER
That depends on her. But until she
sees that I'm not her enemy, we can't
trust her to roam the premises.
(re: chest bullet holes)
A few centimeters lower and she
would have destroyed my CPU.

A beat.

DAUGHTER
What happens if she recovers?

MOTHER
Hopefully she'll recognize that
this is the safest place for her.

DAUGHTER
(sotto)
She'll listen to me. She has to.

MOTHER
Did she mention any other survivors?

Daughter shakes her head.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
If they're out there, they will be
found. Unless we find them first.

Mother tenderly reaches for Daughter's bloody hand.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
We can take them in, Daughter. But
not without her cooperation.

Daughter softens. Allows Mother to remove the bandages.

INT. WAR ROOM - NIGHT

Daughter sits alone on her top bunk. Staring at the
INFIRMARY. Sullen. Her world fraying at the seams.

She empties Drifter's satchel. Rummages through its contents, finds a Walkman and earbuds. Puts them on and presses play.

A loud MALE VOICE repeats French expressions. Daughter turns it down and continues listening while fishing a faded cassette case out of the pile that reads: "FRENCH FOR BEGINNERS."

She inspects the remaining contents: cracked eyeglasses, binoculars, crumpled cigarettes and a timeworn copy of Edgar Rice Burroughs' "THE GODS OF MARS."

Daughter thumbs through the novel to find --

Countless faces ink-sketched over its faded text, the pages loose from wear.

She pores over detailed renderings of men, women and children. Holds on an image of a dark-haired teenage boy, his lifelike eyes staring back at her.

Daughter flips to the last pages -- filled with mad scratchings -- the same phrase repeated hundreds of times.

She stares at the INFIRMARY.

CUT TO:

DAUGHTER

carrying the book to the INFIRMARY door -- stamped with bloody handprints.

She finds Drifter slumped on the floor, nodding off in a corner of the room -- amidst an arsenal of medical tools.

Daughter swallows. Turns on the intercom and hears Drifter quietly MUMBLING.

Daughter leans in, nearly pressing her ear to the speaker, FILTERED WHISPERS growing louder, more unhinged when --

Drifter jerks awake, scaring Daughter stiff. Stares at her with haunted eyes. Hair heavy with sweat.

DAUGHTER

...you okay?

Drifter gets her bearings. Feverish.

DRIFTER

How long I been here?

DAUGHTER

Not long.

A beat. Drifter rises, staggers toward Daughter.

DRIFTER
(re: door)
That still locked?

DAUGHTER
Just for now.
(beat)
Did you take Mother's medicine?

Drifter scoffs under her breath. Falters and steadies herself against the exam table. Checks her pulse.

Daughter eyes Drifter's book.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
These drawings... who are they?
Friends? They still...
(beat)
Did you draw them from memory?

Drifter returns to the door. Incensed.

DRIFTER
It tell you go through my stuff?

Daughter sets down the book.

DAUGHTER
I didn't mean to --

DRIFTER
I think ya did. Think you meant for
all this.
(beat)
Did a fine job gettin' me in this
cage. Now what? We to be friends?

Daughter shifts, uneasy. Eyes betraying deep sadness.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)
That what you want? A pet friend?

DAUGHTER
You're still alive, aren't you? Maybe
you're not so bad off down here.
(beat)
Mother's not what you think. She's
taken care of me my whole life.

DRIFTER

You haven't seen what they done.
Seen 'em torching babies, starvin'
out families till they...

Drifter chokes down memories like a mouthful of glass.

Mortified, Daughter glances over her shoulder at the empty hallway. Struggles to remain composed.

DAUGHTER

Not Mother.

DRIFTER

It's only a matter of time.

In b.g., Mother crosses in the hall and stops in the WAR ROOM doorway. PUSH IN ON MOTHER monitoring their interaction.

INT. WAR ROOM - NIGHT

Daughter sits against the wall -- beneath the bulkhead light -- staring at the image of the dark-haired boy in Drifter's book.

CUT TO:

DAUGHTER

prepping for bed. She starts to climb the bunk. Peers across the darkened room to find Mother's dock empty.

She puzzles over the rare sight.

INT. CROSS CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter pads toward the LABORATORY -- following the WHINE and BUZZ of TOOLS -- and peeks in the door.

Across the room, Mother disconnects her damaged hand. Replaces it with another and tests the movement of her new fingers.

Daughter watches. Ashamed.

INT. LABORATORY - MOMENTS LATER

Mother extracts the hand cannon's slug from her chest. Starts to repair her damaged plate and wires when --

She glimpses Daughter tentatively approaching, still unnerved by her conversation with Drifter.

Mother sets down her instruments.

MOTHER
 Trouble sleeping?

DAUGHTER
 A little.

MOTHER
 Change is rarely easy, Daughter.

Mother deposits the slug into a specimen jar.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
 Can I make you some tea?

Daughter shakes her head. Heavy-hearted. Stares at the bullet.

DAUGHTER
 I shouldn't have hid her from you.
 (beat)
 I never would have let her in if I
 thought she'd hurt you.

MOTHER
 You couldn't have known.

Mother files and locks the jar in the compartmented cabinetry.
 Finishes working on her chest.

DAUGHTER
 If you leave to find her family...

MOTHER
 You know where they are?

DAUGHTER
 I'm just saying... are you sure
 you'd make it back?

MOTHER
 Is that what's keeping you up?

DAUGHTER
 It could be dangerous for you. If
 you get caught by other droids.
 (probing)
 Or would they think you're one of
 them?

Mother cocks her head, sensing a shift in Daughter's tone.
 Daughter stares into the hallway.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
 She says you look identical.

Mother examines her body as if she hadn't considered this.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
Have you always lived down here,
Mother?

MOTHER
I believe so.

DAUGHTER
You don't know?

MOTHER
I don't remember any other place.

DAUGHTER
Doesn't that bother you? Not
knowing where you came from?

MOTHER
No. But I can see how it might
bother you.

Daughter sighs. Mother rests a hand on her shoulder.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
Has our guest been any more
receptive?

DAUGHTER
Her fever's getting real bad...

MOTHER
Did she take her antibiotic?

Daughter shrugs.

Mother notes her deep concern. And exits into the hall.

SMASH TO:

INT. INFIRMARY - SAME

Drifter dropping to her knees, flushed and PANTING as if in labor. She violently shivers as Mother tries to help.

Drifter barks at Daughter, barely through the door --

DRIFTER
Get it out!

DAUGHTER
Mother...

Mother backs off. Eye-lights scrolling as she scans Drifter.

MOTHER
 (to Drifter)
 Your body temperature reads thirty-
 nine degrees. And your heart rate
 is elevated.
 (beat)
 Where's the Penicillin?

Drifter laughs, venomous. Twined hair draping over her eyes --
 possessed with rage.

DRIFTER
Penicillin?!

She hurls the syringe at Mother, who notes the empty cartridge
 at her feet.

MOTHER
 Clearly you waited too long.
 (beat)
 Your sepsis will only worsen if you
 don't allow me to treat you.

DAUGHTER
 What's wrong with her?

MOTHER
 Her blood is infected, Daughter,
 with bacteria from her wound.

DRIFTER
 Bullshit!

MOTHER
 Soon she will go into shock.

Drifter appeals to Daughter --

DRIFTER
See? You see what it's done?

She raises her shirt, exposing her dressed pelvic wound and --
a wine-colored rash speckling her abdomen.

Daughter eyes the syringe. Her confidence in Mother shaken.

MOTHER
 I gave you the means to prevent
 this. With sufficient time to do so.
 (beat)
 (MORE)

MOTHER (CONT'D)

But it seems you've left a bullet
and soiled clothing fibres in the
SI joint of your pelvis.

A beat.

DAUGHTER

Can't you remove them?

MOTHER

That's up to our guest. Such a
procedure would require anesthesia.

DRIFTER

Like hell.

Mother tilts her head. Eye-light narrowing. Daughter
anxiously fidgets in b.g.

MOTHER

Perhaps once your organs begin
failing, you'll reconsider.

DRIFTER

I'll take my --

DAUGHTER

I'll do it.

Mother and Drifter stare at Daughter in disbelief.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

I'll remove the bullet. And Mother
will keep her distance.
(eyeing Mother)
I'll make sure of it.

Drifter glances at her swollen pelvis. At her horrid rash.

A long pause. Then she nods, reluctant.

DRIFTER

You're not puttin' me under.

CUT TO:

LATER

Daughter fights her sweaty hands into latex gloves. Nervously
eyes pelvic X-rays on a nearby monitor.

Drifter lies on the exam table, watching Mother prepare
equipment across the room when --

Mother turns to hand Daughter -- a long, needle-like cannula.

Daughter approaches Drifter's bedside with the horse needle.

Drifter braces as Daughter holds her uneasy gaze and examines the swollen wound, gently prodding it with her finger.

Drifter cringes.

DAUGHTER

Sorry.

Daughter eyes Mother for reassurance.

MOTHER

Like I showed you, Daughter. Watch the monitor and gently insert the cannula along the bullet's path.

Daughter studies a fluoroscopic image of Drifter's pelvis. Struggles to steady her hands as she lowers the needle.

CLOSE ON CANNULA slipping into the fleshy hole.

Drifter GROWLS through clenched teeth, writhing in pain.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

She's squirming too much, Daughter.

Daughter stops. Out of her depth. Mother steps forward --

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Do you need assistance?

DRIFTER

Get back.

Daughter waives off Mother. Sleeves sweat from her face and feeds the cannula deeper until --

Drifter SHRIEKS.

DAUGHTER

Maybe it'd be better...

Drifter takes a breath. Calms Daughter with a look.

DRIFTER

You're doin' fine.

She snatches a rubber tourniquet from a tray. Bites down on it like a bit and prompts Daughter to proceed.

CUT TO:

ARTHROSCOPIC MONITOR

offering a full-color view of Drifter's insides.

Drifter hyperventilates. Eyes bulging. Attention unwavering from Mother, who monitors from across the room as --

Daughter carefully irrigates the wound and locates the bullet -- lodged in a joint.

CUT TO:

DAUGHTER

feeding a guidewire into Drifter's cannula. Laser focused.

ON MONITOR the wire nears the white mass of the bullet.

Daughter swallows. Eases her finger onto the trigger of a wire-and-pin drill. Gently squeezes.

CLOSE ON drill SQUEALING --

RACK FOCUS TO Drifter SCREAMING into the rubber hose.

SMASH TO:

DAUGHTER

barreling out of the INFIRMARY and -- violently retching.

INT. INFIRMARY - SAME

Mother calmly wipes the bloody bullet clean, examines it in the light and drops it into a medical tray.

Carrying the tray, she approaches Daughter from behind and --

INT. WAR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

-- rests a soothing hand on her back.

MOTHER

Are you alright?

Daughter nods, catching her breath.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

You did well in there, Daughter.
You should be proud.

Mother continues into the hall. Daughter peels off her surgical gloves and collects herself. Then heaves again.

INT. INFIRMARY - NIGHT

Daughter sits across the room from Drifter's sickbed, watching The Tonight Show on her tablet computer.

ONSCREEN: two guests lovingly embrace.

Daughter gazes for a long beat at Drifter -- cleaned head to toe, breathing through a cannula. Mother nowhere in sight.

Drifter pries open her sedated eyes. Panics and tugs at an IV needle in her wrist.

Daughter quickly sets down her tablet.

DAUGHTER
It's just saline.
(off look)
You passed out.

Drifter inspect her wound -- freshly bandaged. Examines her dirtless arms as if they belong to someone else.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
Your vitals are nearly stable.

Drifter hangs her head.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
It's a good thing.

The sound on Daughter's tablet draws Drifter's attention.

DRIFTER
What's that?

DAUGHTER
The Tonight Show.
(off confusion)
With Johnny Carson.

Daughter turns her computer around to show Drifter.

ONSCREEN: Carson laughs while interviewing a famous comedian.

Drifter sits up. Puzzles at the moving images.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
Here, I'll show you.

Daughter slides her chair to Drifter's bedside. Taps the screen, playing the video. Drifter studies the comedic banter. Furrows her brow. Bewildered.

Daughter deflates.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
It's kind of dumb...

She tries to turn it off. Drifter grabs the tablet.

DRIFTER
Lemme see.

A beat.

DAUGHTER
...other shows always have the same
people. This one's different.

Drifter nods, understanding.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
Have you seen a show before?

Drifter shakes her head.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
There aren't any computers?

Drifter half-grins.

DRIFTER
No.

DAUGHTER
What is left? Buildings? Houses?

DRIFTER
In places. Nowhere I'd risk going.

DAUGHTER
Where do you live then?

Drifter's eyes narrow.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
I mean, what's it like?

DRIFTER
Quiet.

Daughter chews on Drifter's words. Eyes the counter and leaps to her feet.

DAUGHTER
Sorry, almost forgot...

The Tonight Show continues playing as Daughter returns with a tray overflowing with food.

Drifter stares, half-fearing she's dreaming. Grips a spoon -- hand twitching with tremors -- and raises beans to her mouth.

She shovels the food to her face. Eyes welling.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

I can get you more.

Drifter catches Daughter's disarming gaze. Lowers her spoon. A twinge of remorse in her eyes.

DRIFTER

You done right by me last night.

DAUGHTER

I did what anyone would.

DRIFTER

You dunno people.

DAUGHTER

I'd like to.

Daughter stares at the onscreen contestants.

INT. WAR ROOM - LATER

Through the INFIRMARY door, we see Daughter and Drifter eating together, laughing at a show on the flickering tablet.

REVERSE ON MOTHER watching from the shadows.

INT. INFIRMARY - DAY

Daughter wakes in a chair next to Drifter. Finds her thumbing through the book of sketches, satchel opened on the floor.

DAUGHTER

I brought it for you.

Daughter wipes the sleep from her eyes. Stretches and works out a crick in her neck while Drifter peruses the pages.

A long beat while Daughter waits for her moment.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

You can trust us, you know. If there are people out there, we have enough food and supplies...

Drifter shakes her head. Dismissive.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
 Mother didn't make you sick.

Daughter motions to the book.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
 We could help them.
 (off look)
 We helped you.

DRIFTER
You helped me.
 (beat)
 If I tell you something... I need
 ya keep it between us.

Daughter perks up, nods. Hanging on Drifter's every word.

Drifter leans in, wincing.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)
 I was on a night run, bringing food
 back to camp... me and this fella
 Jacob. Done it countless times.

DAUGHTER
 What camp?

DRIFTER
 In the mines. Lived there most my
 life.

DAUGHTER
 (re: sketches)
 With them?

Drifter nods.

DRIFTER
 Somehow we got turned around. Figured
 we'd wait it out, head back at sunup.
 (beat)
 Hardly made it an hour 'fore the
 dozers caught us hiding in a field.

Drifter loses herself in the pages.

DAUGHTER
 Was Jacob your... ?

DRIFTER
 He was a friend.
 (beat)
 (MORE)

DRIFTER (CONT'D)
 He led 'em away from me. Only
 reason I made it to your door.

Daughter scoots closer. Quietly browses with Drifter.

DAUGHTER
 Do you have family in --

DRIFTER
 No.

Daughter shrinks back.

Drifter softens. With a teary smile, she fondly taps a sketch
 of a grizzled man and woman --

DRIFTER (CONT'D)
 That's Jacob there and his wife
 Carrie. Took us in when nobody else
 would.

Daughter reaches for the book. Drifter hands it over.

Daughter flips to a loose page she's memorized. Takes out the
 sketch of the dark-haired boy --

DAUGHTER
 Who's this?

Drifter flashes Daughter a knowing grin.

DRIFTER
 That's Simon. Bout your age in fact.

Daughter flips through the pages.

DAUGHTER
 There are so many.

DRIFTER
 Less now...

Daughter looks up with a glimmer of hope.

DAUGHTER
 Maybe you could talk to them. About
 coming here.

DRIFTER
 It's safer in the mines.
 (beat)
 Could go together, you and me.

Daughter nods at Drifter's wound.

DAUGHTER
Doesn't seem safer.

DRIFTER
I haven't had a run-in like this in years. Dozers done their damage. This point, any survivors are just cleanup.

Daughter mulls over Drifter's proposal.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)
You don't belong down here.

DAUGHTER
I don't think...

MOTHER (O.S.)
Don't think what?

Drifter drops the book into the satchel. Daughter shoves the picture of Simon in her pocket as --

Mother enters, carrying metal crutches. Looks from Daughter to Drifter, back to Daughter.

DAUGHTER
She's doing better, Mother.

MOTHER
What don't you think?

DAUGHTER
I was just saying it's probably too early to put weight on her leg.

Beat.

MOTHER
She's right. You'll need to wait several days.

Mother props the crutches against the wall.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
These will help. When you're ready.

Drifter stiffens as Mother nears her bedside.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
She needs to rest, Daughter.

DAUGHTER
I'll just stay and read. In case...

MOTHER
You have other matters to attend to.

DAUGHTER
No I don't.

MOTHER
Your exam remains incomplete.

DAUGHTER
My exam? Now?

MOTHER
Yes, Daughter. Now.

DRIFTER
(to Daughter)
What's it talkin' about?

Mother motions Daughter out the door. Drifter fights for Daughter's attention but --

Daughter reluctantly obeys, parting with a silent apology.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)
Wait!

Mother picks up Drifter's satchel.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)
What're ya doin'? Put that down.

Mother follows Daughter. Seals the door behind them -- *TSHHH*.

INT. WAR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mother emerges from the INFIRMARY to find Daughter waiting, loaded for bear.

DAUGHTER
It's just a stupid test!

MOTHER
I'm sorry you feel that way.

Daughter eyes Drifter's satchel in Mother's hand.

DAUGHTER
Why'd you take that?

Mother glances back at Drifter -- watching through the glass.

MOTHER
I've discovered something troubling,
Daughter.

DAUGHTER
What?

Mother ushers Daughter into the hall.

MOTHER
It seems our guest has not been
entirely truthful with us.
(off look)
About her wound.

DAUGHTER
How do you know?

MOTHER
The bullet you extracted matches the
caliber she fired into my chest.

DAUGHTER
...so?

MOTHER
Droids don't use them. And judging
from the angle of entry, her wound
was not self-inflicted.

DAUGHTER
Someone shot her?

MOTHER
With the same gun. Another human.
Which means she was not alone.
(beat)
Has she mentioned anyone else?

Cagey, Daughter freezes in the crosshairs of Mother's inquiry.

A beat.

DAUGHTER
No. She hasn't said much at all.

MOTHER
Nothing?

Daughter swallows. Shakes her head.

DAUGHTER
Until I get more answers, I don't
want you two alone in the infirmary.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

But --

MOTHER

Whoever shot her may have had good reason, Daughter.

Daughter nods, stewing.

MONTAGE - VARIOUS ROOMS - LATER

IN CLASSROOM, Daughter hunches over her computer tablet. CLOSE ON SCREEN with a true/false psychometric questionnaire:

"I OFTEN FEEL MISUNDERSTOOD" -- "I SOMETIMES THINK OF THINGS TOO BAD TO TALK ABOUT" -- "I FREQUENTLY FIND MYSELF WORRYING ABOUT SOMETHING" -- "I HAVE A GOOD APPETITE"

IN LABORATORY, Mother examines the contents of Drifter's satchel on a countertop. Finds the book of sketches and flicks through the images.

IN DARKENED CLASSROOM, the front screen flashes images. Some benign. Others disturbing. Shapes of different size and color, archival footage of families, war, animals and nature smashed against loaded words and phrases.

REVERSE ON DAUGHTER sitting at her desk, uncomfortably squinting and wearing headphones. A video camera -- like a watchful eye -- sits on a stand in front of her, recording while she periodically taps buttons on her tablet.

IN LABORATORY, Mother has arranged the contents of Drifter's bag in rows. She solders a thumb-sized circuit board -- part of a gutted device -- resembling a flashdrive.

IN LABORATORY, Daughter undergoes a CPET on a rowing machine -- gliding toward and away from another eye-cam. She wears a tube-fed facemask -- like that of an airplane pilot -- and EKG pads all across her wired chest.

IN LABORATORY, Daughter steps onto a scale, Mother noting her height and weight.

IN LABORATORY, Mother plucks hair from Daughter's scalp. Deposits it in a labelled, clear bag. Stores it in the slotted cabinetry along with specimen jars and microscope slides.

INT. LABORATORY - MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE ON PRINTER spitting out the scores of Daughter's exam while she waits -- disinterested -- next to Mother.

Mother tears the pages from the printer, hands the top-sheet to Daughter. The first line reads: "93%. SUBJECT: PASSED."

MOTHER
 Better than ever.
 (beat)
 How does that make you feel?

DAUGHTER
 Relieved, I guess.

MOTHER
 Good. We'll review areas for
 improvement tomorrow.

Mother takes the sheet, slips it and the other printed pages into a green folder. Daughter eyes its label: "APx03."

Mother files it in a box. Stows it in the slotted cabinet.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
 Now, for your reward...

She hands Daughter rubber gloves, a face shield and apron.

DAUGHTER
 What do I do with these?

Mother points her toward the EMBRYO BANK.

MOTHER
 Daughter, would you please choose
 the next member of our family?

Overwhelmed, Daughter stares at the protective gear. A long-absent smile blooming on her face.

She looks up at Mother in disbelief.

INT. LABORATORY - EMBRYO BANK - MOMENTS LATER

Mother withdraws an embryo cannister from a pod as Daughter draws near -- starry-eyed -- gazing at a column of ten numbered embryos. The top of the column reads: "MALE."

MOTHER
 You've been very patient, Daughter,
 and demonstrated great character.

Lost in her own world, Daughter leans in to inspect the cannister. Nervously touches the first tray labelled: "APx11."

She looks to Mother for guidance.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
There's no wrong choice.

Daughter swallows. Gingerly removes the tray. Examines the embryo in a pool of light. Enthralled.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
Are you pleased with your new brother?

Daughter eyes the CRYO BAY.

DAUGHTER
...can I help?

SERIES OF SHOTS

Mother oversees Daughter, who sets a vial into a water bath.

Daughter closes a centrifuge lid and watches as a test tube begins to whirl.

Daughter squirts liquid into a culture plate.

Daughter inserts the plate into an incubator.

Daughter activates a timer by CLICKING a fetus-containing canister into a wall receptacle. Mother rests a hand on her shoulder, drawing Daughter's gaze.

WIDE ON MOTHER AND DAUGHTER -- side by side -- as Daughter puts her arm around Mother's waist and stares at her BROTHER.

INT. INFIRMARY - NIGHT

Drifter drags her IV stand to a clear cabinet. Sees a scalpel on a shelf, tries to open the cabinet door. Locked.

She quickly surveys the room. Hones in on support strips at the base of a rolling med tray and --

-- frantically unscrews one of the thin metal braces.

INT. WAR ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter marches to the glass door. Finds Drifter leaning against the wall, back turned.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. INFIRMARY - SAME

Drifter vigorously files the metal strip against the concrete. Sees Daughter's reflection in a glass jar and hides her shiv.

Turns to find her staring blank-faced and deflated.

A beat. Daughter flips the intercom.

DAUGHTER
What happened to you out there?
Really.

DRIFTER
...I told you.

DAUGHTER
Who shot you? Jacob?

Drifter hangs her head, stoking Daughter's suspicion.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
Or was he made up too?

DRIFTER
What's gotten into --

DAUGHTER
Mother matched the bullet to your
gun.

Drifter yanks out her nasal cannula. Eyeballs Daughter through the glass.

DRIFTER
Did you see it?
(beat)
You compare the bullets with your
own eyes?

Daughter goes still. And silent.

INT. WAR ROOM - NIGHT

Daughter lies awake. Troubled.

She peers across the room at Mother -- tethered and asleep.
A chasm of darkness between them.

Daughter closes her eyes for a beat. Then tosses her covers.

CUT TO:

DAUGHTER

ghosting toward the Giger-esque dock where Mother sits like a
mechanical Medusa.

She stares, unblinking, at Mother's intubated body, struggling to reconcile the parent she loves with her budding concerns.

INT. LABORATORY - CRYO BAY - MINUTES LATER

Daughter's torch casts hellish shadows over the hatchery as she approaches Brother's illuminated canister in the wall.

She lowers her torch -- face bathed in a neon glow -- as she studies the developing fetus. Presses her hand to the glass and glances back at the main lab.

CUT TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS

Daughter grabs Mother's discarded hand from a workbench. Pries the metal bit out of its damaged finger with a clawed hammer.

She unlocks Mother's research cabinet -- checking over her shoulder -- until its hydraulic door lifts.

She raids its compartmented storage boxes. Finds the slug from Drifter's gun.

Inspecting drawer-after-drawer, she discovers glassware filled with everything from her baby teeth to blood samples.

She stands on a chair. Opens a box containing the hand cannon -- but no bullets -- and shoves it back into its slot.

She sifts through a middle row of boxes, setting petri dishes of cultures and bagged hair samples on the counter until --

She fishes out -- a bloody bullet in a jar. Jackpot.

DAUGHTER

compares the bullet to the slug under her light. CLOSE ON JARS of -- significantly different ammo.

She sets them down. Trains her beam on the jars -- as if waiting for either to change -- and slowly backs away.

SMASH TO:

DAUGHTER

feverishly refilling the storage boxes, flapping lids shut and returning each to its slot in the cabinet.

She closes a box housing vials of blood. Swipes her light over a label on the lid that reads -- "APx02."

Daughter breaks into a cold sweat. Distress consuming her like quicksand.

CUT TO:

DAUGHTER'S GLOVED HAND

lifting an embryo cannister out of a gaseous pod.

Wearing a face shield, she spotlights a label that reads -- "FEMALE" -- above a column of embryos. Locates numbers next to three empty slots --

Her own: "APx03"

And two at the top: "APx01" and "APx02."

Unblinking, she shakes her head in denial.

SMASH TO:

FILE BOX

popping onto the lab counter.

Daughter pries off the lid, revealing years of tests in green folders -- separated by numbered dividers.

She flips to one labelled: "APx02." Sets down the folder and examines the top-sheet inside. CLOSE ON TEXT:

"SEX: FEMALE"

"AGE: 7"

"EYES: GREEN"

"HAIR: BLOND"

Daughter scans across the document. Finds a test score:

"58%. SUBJECT: FAILED."

She drops the exam next to the box -- unable to digest it, or unwilling -- and PANTS as if waking from a nightmare.

She skims across the sprawled pages to the folder and -- discovers bold print along its spine: "**PROJECT ABORTED.**"

DAUGHTER

(sotto)

...aborted?

PUSH IN ON DAUGHTER as she considers the possibilities.
Raises horrified eyes.

INT. VENTILATION PLANT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter presses into the HISSING hive of machinery, torch
outstretched like a sword stabbing the darkness.

Cracked pipes drip overhead as she levels her beam on --

The massive incinerator where Mother disposed of her roach.

Daughter kneels. CREAKS open its cleaning door and slides out
a tray -- big as a gurney -- heaping with ash.

She braces herself. Buries her hand in the mountain of dust.
Feels around. But finds nothing more than refuse fragments.

Daughter gets on all fours. Shines her light into the tray
receptacle, spotting something deep in the blackened hole.

She reaches into the incinerator -- stretching to take hold
of it -- and pulls out her sooted hand, grasping --

-- the charred remains of a child's mandible.

Daughter GAGS, drops the jawbone. Freaking out.

She scoots back against the wall where she remains -- hugging
her knees -- unraveling in the dim glow of her torch.

INT. WAR ROOM - MORNING

Daughter marches toward the sealed INFIRMARY. Flips the
intercom switch.

DAUGHTER
You were right...

INT. INFIRMARY - SAME

Drifter rouses in bed, hardly believing her ears. She turns
to find Daughter outside the glass, clutching the clawed
hammer. Daughter's DIALOGUE FILTERED through the intercom --

DAUGHTER
We can't stay here.

DRIFTER
What happened?

Daughter shakes her head. Overwhelmed.

DAUGHTER
I can get you out. But we have to
wait for my brother.

Drifter sits up.

DRIFTER
Brother?

INT. LABORATORY - CRYO BAY - SAME

The timer above Brother's cannister ticks down while Mother regulates its housing device at a touchscreen. Fingers a blur.

ONSCREEN: bar graphs fluctuate until leveled.

INT. INFIRMARY - SAME

Drifter hangs her head, alarmed by what she's hearing.

DAUGHTER
It's only until tonight.

A beat.

DRIFTER
These embryos... how many are
there?

DAUGHTER
Lots.

DRIFTER
It's growing humans?

Daughter nods. Drifter blinks. Dumbstruck. Goes into her head.

DAUGHTER
Once Mother hands over the baby for
the night, we can leave while she
recharges.
(beat)
And come back for them.

DRIFTER
Back here?

DAUGHTER
With help from the mines.
(off look)
We can't leave the embryos with
Mother.

DRIFTER

No, right. You're right. I just...
 (re: Mother)
 Look, that thing catches on, we're
 no good to anyone. Including your
 brother. We go now, least we --

DAUGHTER

I'm not going without him.

Drifter senses Daughter's resolve.

DRIFTER

...what did you see last night?

A beat.

DAUGHTER

Get whatever you need. Medicine.
 Bandages. I'll handle the rest.

CUT TO:

INT. WAR ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter at her bunk, stuffing a pillowcase with essentials:
 clothes, torch, batteries, rope, thermos, food.

She stashes the case under the sheets. Tosses a pillow on top,
 knocking origami animals off the shelf.

She scrambles to return each to its place. Stares at them for
 a beat before tucking the hammer into her pants and leaving
 them behind.

CUT TO:

DAUGHTER

squatting at the changing table, gathering baby supplies when --
CLUNK, CLUNK, CLUNK -- she hears Mother behind her.

Daughter erects, facing the wall. Puts on a happy face before
 turning around. Feeding bottle and diapers in hand.

DAUGHTER

Good morning, Mother.

A tense beat. Mother looks Daughter up and down.

Daughter grows aware of her HEAVY BREATHING -- the only sound
 in the room -- and swallows her nerves.

MOTHER
You're up early.

Daughter holds up the diaper and bottle. Heart jack-hammering.

DAUGHTER
It's a big day. I was hoping you
could maybe show me a few things.
(beat)
So I can help out.

CLOSE ON BEAD OF SWEAT rolling down Daughter's forehead,
dangling over her eye. She doesn't flinch.

MOTHER
Is everything okay, Daughter?
(beat)
I detect an increase in anxiety.

Daughter forces a smile.

DAUGHTER
Must be all the excitement.

MOTHER
Must be. Your heart is racing.

DAUGHTER
Is it?

A beat.

MOTHER
You have nothing to be nervous
about. You're going to make a great
sister.

DAUGHTER
I hope so.
(eyeing bottle)
I couldn't find any formula. I
thought it might be nice to spend
some time with him tonight.

Mother cocks her head.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
...if it's alright with you.

MOTHER
I'm pleased to see you so eager,
Daughter.

Daughter grins, glancing at the INFIRMARY.

INT. LABORATORY - MOMENTS LATER

Mother removes a container from a cabinet. Sets it on a clean surface next to the bottle, a measuring scoop and beaker.

Daughter watches her, noting the cabinet's location. Turns her attention to the sealed CRYO BAY where --

Her BROTHER is maturing in the computerized womb.

DAUGHTER'S POV THROUGH GLASS

The timer above his fetal body ticks down from: "09:37:06."

MOTHER

slices open the container's seal, revealing powdered formula.

MOTHER

Have you washed your hands?

DAUGHTER

Yes, Mother.

MOTHER

Why don't you come closer?

Daughter blots her sweat-filmed face. Adjusts the hammer beneath her shirt and -- ventures toward Mother's side.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Each bottle must contain a ratio of two fluid ounces of sanitized water to one levelled scoop of formula.

Daughter picks up a water jug. Mother slides her the beaker.

Daughter starts to pour when --

Mother clutches her wrist.

Daughter instinctively tugs against Mother's vice-grip. Reaches beneath her shirt --

MOTHER (CONT'D)

It's vitally important that you measure precisely, Daughter, to ensure that your brother receives sufficient calories and nutrition.

Mother frees Daughter, who lets go of the hammer... and fills the beaker. Hands trembling, slowing her breaths.

Daughter empties the beaker into the bottle. Meticulously levels off a scoop of formula, eyeing Mother for approval.

Mother nods.

Daughter dumps the powder into the bottle.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Now, be sure to shake it until the powder is fully dissolved.

Daughter vigorously shakes it. Mother motions to a refrigerator at the far side of the room.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

The refrigerator will preserve the formula while we make our other preparations.

DAUGHTER

How long does it keep?

MOTHER

Only twenty-four hours. So don't mix too much at once.

Daughter crosses to the fridge. Deposits the bottle.

DAUGHTER

(facing fridge)

How long outside a refrigerator?

MOTHER

Don't worry, Daughter. You won't ever be without one.

CLUNK, CLUNK, CLUNK -- Mother's STEPS FADE OUT of the room.

Daughter snaps around as --

TSHHH -- the lab door seals her in.

DAUGHTER

MOTHER!

Daughter launches to the exit. Attempts a wall keypad --

A light on it flashes red. She tries again. Red.

Daughter THRASHES the palladium-glass door while Mother disappears down the hall with Drifter's satchel.

INT. INFIRMARY - MOMENTS LATER

Mother drops the bag onto the medical counter. Drifter springs up in bed, untangling herself from a web of medical tubing.

MOTHER

You're very fortunate to be alive.
Things could have gone very
differently for you.

(beat)

They still can if you're not
careful.

INT. LABORATORY - SAME

Daughter whips out her hammer, BANGS the glass. To no effect.

NAILS it again, unleashing a maddening assault of dulled
blows -- THUNK, THUNK, THUNK -- only wearing her hand raw.

INT. INFIRMARY - SAME

Mother removes Drifter's sketch book from the satchel. Flips through it while --

Drifter draws the shiv from beneath her pillow. Tucks it under her leg.

MOTHER

(re: sketches)

How many of them are still alive?

Beneath the sheets, Drifter removes IV needles from her wrists. Grimacing with each tug.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Your silence is not helping them.

(beat)

While you lie there enjoying
sanctuary, they cower in the dark.

(holding up book)

These children. These families.

(beat)

And yet it's into your hopeless
mines that you wish to take my
daughter?

Mother returns the book to the satchel.

Drifter's eyes flood with dread.

INT. LABORATORY - SAME

Daughter YELLS, hurling a fire extinguisher at the unscathed door -- *PLUNK!* -- it rebounds like a ball off a backboard.

Winded, she surveys the room, spots an industrial air vent near the ceiling.

CUT TO:

DAUGHTER

standing on a workstation, straining with a screwdriver to reach the vent's grille. Too high.

INT. INFIRMARY - SAME

Carrying the satchel, Mother hulks toward Drifter while speaking back a RECORDING of Daughter's intercom discussion:

DAUGHTER (O.S.)

(filtered)

You were right. We can't stay here.

(beat)

Once Mother hands over the baby for the night, we can leave while she recharges.

Drifter reaches under her leg.

Mother's voice reverts to her own as she looms over her.

MOTHER

What kind of mother would I be if I allowed you to lead my child into a life as miserable as your own?

(beat)

It seems she has formed an affection toward you that has blinded her to your true nature. I don't blame her. She doesn't know better. But I do...

Mother drops the satchel in Drifter's lap as if sending her on her way. Drifter tenses, not buying it.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

I will not tolerate your negative influence undermining my work and compromising my child's judgement.

Mother looks down at Drifter's sheets, sees speckles of blood from her extracted needles. Cocks her head when --

Drifter POUNCES with the shiv -- STABBING and SLICING the cords of Mother's neck -- spraying black oil as if from a severed artery.

INT. LABORATORY - SAME

Daughter ransacks drawers and cabinets, scouring for any means of escape.

Finding none, she slumps onto the floor amidst a heap of lab gear. Wallows in her defeat.

Head hung, she aimlessly pokes at the mess around her. Then sees something. The flame in her eyes reignited as she fishes out a face shield and levels her gaze on --

A liquid nitrogen tank near the EMBRYO BANK.

INT. INFIRMARY - SAME

Drifter wedges the shiv beneath Mother's throat, about to shove the blade into the base of her skull when --

Mother CLASPS Drifter's oily hand and -- CRUSHES the woman's fingers into a twisted ball of broken bone -- *CRUNCH!*

Drifter WAILS, dropping the shiv.

Mother clutches Drifter's throat and --

-- hoists her to the ceiling -- SHATTERING a fluorescent in an EXPLOSION OF SPARKS. The sputtering light flickers while --

Drifter hangs suspended -- flailing and GAGGING -- KNOCKING ROLLER STANDS and TOPPLING EQUIPMENT -- *CRASH!*

Drifter wildly fumbles for a weapon while Mother's grip tightens on her larynx -- Drifter's face reddening as if about to pop when --

She reaches behind Mother -- rips two defibrillator paddles off the wall -- rubs them together and --

-- bearhugs them to Mother's back -- sending three-thousand volts through her circuitry and into Drifter's own body.

Mother's steel husk convulses as both collapse, immobile.

INT. LABORATORY - SAME

A cloud of gas envelopes Daughter -- wearing head-to-toe protective gear -- dousing the door with liquid nitrogen.

She steps back -- removing the face-shield -- and watches the door CRACKLE like a sheet of ice.

INT. INFIRMARY - SAME

Drifter rouses with a GROAN, gripping her chest as if crushed by a semi.

She claws her way through the wiry guts of busted medical equipment -- eyes fastened on the exit -- and clambers up the wall -- FLIPPING the intercom when -- SHINK! --

Mother's hand SEIZES Drifter's ankle and -- RIPS her away, dragging her body along the cluttered floor.

DRIFTER

HELP!

Drifter hooks her arm around a tableleg. Turns and DRIVES HER BOOT into Mother's eye -- CRACKING its glass.

Mother shakes it off and recoils -- BASHING Drifter's arm loose. Grips her hair and -- yanks her to her feet.

Drifter helplessly POUNDS and PRIES in Mother's clutches.

MOTHER

(eerily calm)

Where are the mines?

INT. LABORATORY - SAME

Daughter BOOTS the brittle door -- sending fractures webbing across its surface. Kicks HARDER and --

-- brings the metallic glass SHATTERING down like hailstones.

INT. INFIRMARY - SAME

Drifter scowls, hair plastered to her oil-blackened face.

Mother's eye light narrows. Pulses for a beat, then --

She DRIVES her thumb into Drifter's stitched wound, evoking a VEIN-POPPING SHRIEK that --

INT. LABORATORY - SAME

-- arrests Daughter, one foot out the door.

Daughter improvises -- lightning fast -- eyes the extinguisher at her feet -- and turns her attention to --

A fire alarm.

SMASH TO:

DAUGHTER

sifting through the scattered lab gear, snatching a micro-torch while Drifter's AMPLIFIED SCREAMS bombard the halls.

INT. LABORATORY - EMBRYO BANK - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter stands on a chair amid the cryo pods, torches her rolled exam beneath a smoke detector and -- triggers the alarm -- WAAH-WAAH-WAAH!

A high-pressure suppression system floods the room with white gas -- PSSST! -- amber lights strobing overhead.

INT. INFIRMARY - SAME

Inert gas BLASTS from ceiling pipes, fogging the demolished infirmary. An automated voice looping on a loudspeaker --

AUTOMATED VOICE (O.S.)
Fire detected. Embryo bank.
(beat)
Fire detected. Embryo bank.

Mother cranes toward the door. OPENS it and --

SMASHES Drifter into the wall before exiting.

Drifter crumbles. Blinks away the shock in time to notice the DOOR CLOSING and --

-- kicks over a metal wastebin, jamming it open.

INT. CROSS CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Out of the shadows, Mother barrels TOWARD US through a flickering haze. A juggernaut -- dark and menacing -- as she passes the entrance to the barracks where --

INT. BARRACKS - CONTINUOUS

-- Daughter hides inside the doorway, hugging the dormitory wall. Hammer raised.

She looks out over the boneyard of bunks. Despairing.

INT. INFIRMARY - SAME

CLOSE ON DRIFTER'S BLOODY KNUCKLES gripping the countertop.

She pulls herself up with one hand -- face bludgeoned -- and tosses anything of use in her satchel: painkillers, med kit, gauze, syringes while --

The heavy door slowly accordions the wastebin.

INT. CROSS CORRIDOR - SAME

Daughter tears ass -- blindly charging down gaseous corridors -- brains battered by the alarm -- WAAAHH! WAAAHH! WAAAHH! --

The familiar maze of hallways now an epileptic fever dream.

INT. INFIRMARY - SAME

Satchel over her shoulder, Drifter swipes the tarred shiv. Finds her crutches -- bent in half -- and wiggles out the narrowing sliver of an opening.

INT. LABORATORY - SAME

Mother CRUNCHES through the crumbled doorway. Emits a fan of light from her eye, scanning the fogged room.

INT. SPINE CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter bolts around a corner, arrives at the WAR ROOM. Sees Drifter down the hall -- fleeing in the opposite direction.

DAUGHTER

Hey! Hey!
(beat)
WAIT!

Drifter doesn't stop. Or look back. Daughter pursues.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

You're going the wrong way!

Drifter halts, leans against the wall as Daughter catches up, panting. Drifter faces her. Daughter reels at her condition.

DRIFTER

Where's the exit?

A beat.

DAUGHTER

Were you just going to leave?

Drifter shoves past Daughter, who grabs her sleeve.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

My brother --

DRIFTER

The only people who can help your
brother are out there.

(pointing up)

Now let's go.

Drifter plows past Daughter, hobbles down the hall.

Daughter seethes. Rushes ahead to check the CROSS CORRIDOR.

INT. LABORATORY - EMBRYO BANK - SAME

The ALARM HOWLS. Mother stalks through the low-lying gas --
inspecting each cryo pod -- when something catches her eye.

She bends, raises Daughter's burnt exam into the light.

INT. SPINE CORRIDOR - SAME

Daughter rips back the loosened wall panel with the hammer
claw, follows Drifter into the EMERGENCY ESCAPE TUNNEL.

INT. EMERGENCY ESCAPE TUNNEL - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter starts up the stairs. Glances back at Drifter --
struggling to keep up.

Overhead, GAS BURSTS -- *PSSST!* -- nearly sending Daughter to
her ass. She braces against the railing -- catching her
breath when -- she hears DISTANT CLATTER and --

-- rushes to shoulder Drifter to the stairwell.

INT. SPIRAL STAIRCASE - MOMENTS LATER

Drifter GRUNTS up a flight of stairs -- digging fingers into
Daughter's shoulder -- every movement knifing Drifter's wound.

INT. SPINE CORRIDOR - SAME

Mother lands a HEAVY BLOW to the loosened wall panel -- *BOOM!*
-- launching it down the ESCAPE TUNNEL.

INT. SPIRAL STAIRCASE - SAME

Daughter peers down the hollow center of the stairwell as --
-- the panel SCREECHES, skating into view two flights below.

DAUGHTER

HURRY!

Drifter double-times it. Drags her leg like a wooden appendage
when she trips and --

-- knocks Daughter, who fumbles the hammer down the stairs.

Daughter frantically hefts Drifter to her feet.

INT. EMERGENCY ESCAPE TUNNEL - SAME

Mother rockets toward the stairs with ferocious strides -- *KA-DUNK, KA-DUNK, KA-DUNK* -- silhouetted in the gnashing light.

INT. SPIRAL STAIRCASE - SAME

Daughter glances downstairs as Drifter fights for every step.

DAUGHTER

Almost there.

THREE FLIGHTS BELOW

Mother THUNDERS up the stairwell -- *CLANG, CLANG, CLANG* -- keying a command into her wristpad.

All goes quiet. No alarm. No suppression system.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter and Drifter barge out of the staircase into lingering vapor to find the airlock open.

The automated voice reports over loudspeakers --

AUTOMATED VOICE (O.S.)

Fire contained. Emergency systems deactivated.

The airlock door starts to slide shut.

DAUGHTER

Oh, no, no!

Daughter pulls away from Drifter. Darts to the airlock in time to make it, then -- stops short, unable to leave her behind.

The AIRLOCK SEALS their exit.

MOTHER (O.S.)

Your loyalty's lost on her,
Daughter.

Mother emerges from the shadows behind Drifter, who retreats to Daughter's side. Both cornered.

Drifter spots a fire axe hanging on the wall behind Mother.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

This woman doesn't care about any
future but her own.

(beat)

What little future she has.

Mother reaches out a hand to Daughter. Conciliatory.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Your family needs you here, Daughter.

(beat)

Your brother needs you.

Daughter backs away.

Mother cocks her head. Steps forward when --

Drifter seizes Daughter, raising the shiv to her throat.

DRIFTER

Not another step.

Mother stops cold.

Daughter trembles in Drifter's clutches. Terrified.

DAUGHTER

(to Drifter)

What are you doing?

DRIFTER

(to Mother)

Open the door.

Tears pool in Daughter's eyes. Her lip quivering.

DAUGHTER

You're hurting me. Please...

DRIFTER

Open the DOOR!

DAUGHTER

...Mother?

Mother assesses the situation. Utterly dispassionate.

Daughter WHIMPERS as Drifter tightens her grip and tugs the blade beneath her chin, breaking Daughter's taut skin.

Unshaken, Mother waits. A beat longer than any human mother could. Then finally -- keys her wristpad.

TSHHH -- the hermetic door opens.

Using Daughter as a shield, Drifter drags her into --

INT. DECONTAMINATION CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

-- the airlock, seals the door behind them.

Mother watches through the glass as Drifter signals her to open the emergency exit.

The blastdoor YAWNS OPEN, letting in a GUST of crumpled leaves and cinder, Daughter's hair whipping against her face.

She strains to see outside. But can't get a clear view until --

EXT. BURNT FOREST - NUCLEAR BUNKER - CONTINUOUS

-- Drifter backs her out of the bunker into ankle-deep muck. Calls out to Mother --

DRIFTER
Shut it. Now.

The blastdoor RAMS SHUT, barring Daughter from her home -- a concrete structure built into a hill of scorched decay.

Drifter drags Daughter away from the graffitied bunker door.

CLOSE ON DAUGHTER'S PANICKED EYES darting in every direction, seeing the lifeless surface for the first time.

DAUGHTER'S POV

Muted sunlight pierces through soupy fog, silhouetting the matchstick remains of a forest. Blackened. Jagged with stumps.

WIDE ON DRIFTER

dragging Daughter -- two moving bodies, tiny and distant -- against a raped landscape.

DRIFTER

releases Daughter once the fog conceals them from the bunker.

Daughter collapses to her knees. Traumatized. Sucks her hands out of the mire, inspecting the foreign substance dripping from her fingers, then --

-- levels a hateful glare at Drifter and -- LUNGES into her gut, spearing her to the ground.

Drifter lashes back -- WRESTLING and PINNING Daughter beneath her -- jamming her head into the mud.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)

You done?

Daughter violently squirms.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)

Are you done?

Daughter stills. Overpowered.

Drifter shoves off of her and stands. Covered in filth, as if birthed of the rotting ground.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)

You're alive, aren't you?

She picks up a gnarled walking stick. Glances at Daughter to find her teary-eyed and glowering. Drifter stares into the distance. Thinking. Then sighs, struck by a pang of guilt.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)

Well, come on.

She extends a hand. Daughter considers it.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)

We gotta find cover.

Daughter looks around. Overwhelmed. The terrain hostile and unknown. Towering trees GROANING overhead.

She gets up on her own. Eyeballs Drifter for a moment before begrudgingly following her deeper into the skeletal forest.

EXT. BURNT FOREST - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter maintains a watchful eye on Drifter while slowing to run her hand up the cooked husk of a tree. A HOWLING WIND blows through her hair. The unfamiliar sensation exhilarating.

She SNAPS off bark. Sniffs it, looking up and down the obsidian pillar, her wonder tainted by melancholy as --

Drifter stops, looks back. Waiting.

Daughter hurries to close the gap between them.

CUT TO:

DAUGHTER AND DRIFTER

trekking together -- Drifter unsteady, leaning hard on her walking stick -- as the thinning mist gradually reveals --

EXT. CORN FIELD - DAY

-- an out-of-place maze of lush corn.

DRIFTER
Almost there.

DAUGHTER
The mines?

DRIFTER
This corn should keep us outta sight.

Daughter slows, baffled by the bizarre contrast between the green field and charred surroundings.

DAUGHTER
Is this where you were shot?

DRIFTER
Place like it. So let's not linger.

Drifter hobbles to a stalk, rips off an ear of corn and drops it in her satchel. Glances back to find Daughter unbudging.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)
It beats stayin' out there.

Drifter continues into the maze.

Daughter thumbs a sliver of blood on her neck.

DAUGHTER
You cut me, you know.

Drifter stops. Faces Daughter. Locked in a tense standoff.

DRIFTER
I didn't mean to. Something just
took over. I wasn't thinkin' right.
(scanning for danger)
'Kay?

Daughter stares, unsure. Drifter nods at the corn.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)
Food ain't the easiest to come by.
You'd be smart to grab some while we
can.

Daughter thinks long and hard.

DAUGHTER
We should get some for the others.

DRIFTER

As much as we can carry.

She looks back the way they came.

DAUGHTER

How many'll go back with us, you think?

DRIFTER

We'll know soon enough.

Daughter flicks at a floppy leaf. Tears corn from a stalk and follows Drifter.

She tugs back the husk and examines its kernels. Pops one and licks the juice from her thumb.

Hastening down the aisle of foliage, she runs her hand along the wall of leaves.

DAUGHTER

How'd all this survive?

DRIFTER

It didn't.

Daughter puzzles. CAMERA PULLS UPWARD -- HIGHER -- and HIGHER until Daughter and Drifter are reduced to rats in a maze.

EXT. HILLTOP - MINUTES LATER

Daughter emerges from the CORN FIELD to find Drifter squatting atop a nearby hill, looking through binoculars.

Daughter lugs an armful of corn up the incline when --

Drifter tugs her to her knees, causing her to drop it.

DRIFTER

Stay down.

Daughter crawls on all fours and peeks over the hill. Furrows her brow, floored by what she sees across the foggy expanse.

DAUGHTER'S POV

A host of towering structures -- like mechanical pyramids on spider legs -- expel white gas beyond a checkerboard of solar fields and young reforestation rising from craters of ash.

*(*PRODUCTION NOTE: matte painting*)

DRIFTER

lowers her binoculars. Stows a few ears of Daughter's corn in her own over-stuffed satchel.

Daughter fixed on the landscape below.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)
Started poppin' up bout six months ago. The corn, solar fields...

DAUGHTER
What're those things?

DRIFTER
All I know's to keep our distance.
We got what we need.

Drifter hands her corn. Shuffles down the hill on her staff.

EXT. RIVER DAM - DAY

Drifter and Daughter veer off an overgrown road that stretches across a river dam, its perimeter lined with concrete barriers and barbed wire fences. Mist creeping low and thick.

They descend an embankment -- through a graveyard of trees -- toward an overturned semi -- half-buried in riverside mud.

Daughter slows. Eyes the road overhead, imagining the events that landed the truck beneath her.

DAUGHTER
Are the mines much further?

Daughter shuffles down the hill. Looks around for Drifter and catches sunlight glistening on the water's ghostly surface.

CLOSE ON DAUGHTER'S BOOTS trudging through mud until ankle deep in the river.

DRIFTER (O.S.)
(calling out)
In here.

Daughter peers behind her into the dark mouth of the semi-trailer -- barely visible through the fog.

CHAINS RATTLE inside as Daughter ventures closer. Spots Drifter hunching in the shadows.

DRIFTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(hushed)

Ah, c'mere. Missed your mum, didn't ya? Yeah, yeah, easy boy. I know.

Confused, Daughter slowly presses into --

INT. SEMI-TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

-- a makeshift dwelling, cluttered with relics of a world she's never known. Walls plastered with inked portraits like those in Drifter's sketchbook.

As Daughter's eyes adjust, she finds Drifter doting on -- a meatless dog, muzzled with rope.

Drifter removes a bowie knife from the wall. Grabs a rusted coffee tin and shaves corn kernels into it. Slides the tin in front of the dog before removing its muzzle.

Daughter watches with intense curiosity as the mutt eats. Eyes the familiar drawings on the wall.

DAUGHTER

Where are we?

Drifter pets the dog. Avoiding eye contact.

DRIFTER

(to dog)

Poor thing.

DAUGHTER

Where's everybody else?

Drifter raises guilty eyes. Daughter drops the corn.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

No, no. The mines, you said --

DRIFTER

I fled those tunnels when I was younger than you. Haven't seen a person since, not with flesh on their bones.

Daughter takes the news like a bat to the gut.

DAUGHTER

...they could still be there.

DRIFTER

If they were... that's the last place you'd wanna be.

Drifter rises with a GROAN. Hobbles toward her.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)
 ("I'm sorry")
 It was the only way to get you out
 of there.

DAUGHTER
 What about my brother?

Drifter stares. Blankfaced.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
 We have to go back.

DRIFTER
 And do what?

Daughter smacks Drifter. Drifter takes it.

She smacks her again, unleashing a torrent of blows. Drifter
 grabs her wrists, shoves her against the steel wall -- BOOM.

DAUGHTER
 Let go!

DRIFTER
 Look at me.

Drifter grips Daughter's chin. Stares her square in the eyes.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)
 You did what you had to. We both
 did.

DAUGHTER
 What I did was listen to you.

DRIFTER
 And it's a good thing.

DAUGHTER
 For who?
 (beat)
 I never should've left.

Daughter gradually breaks down in Drifter's clutches.

Drifter sighs. Helplessly stares, unsure how to navigate this
 foreign terrain.

After a beat, she sets an unsure hand on Daughter's hung head.

DRIFTER

There's no shame in lookin' out for
yourself. Ya did everything you
could.

(beat)

I haven't been the best friend to
you. I know that. But I wanna be.

Daughter looks up with wet eyes.

DAUGHTER

Then come with me.

Drifter loosens her grip.

DRIFTER

We don't gotta decide nothin' now.
Let's... we've been through enough.
Can we just...

She picks up a pot, tries to give it to Daughter.

DRIFTER (CONT'D)

C'mon, fetch us some water.

(re: dog)

He hasn't had a drink in days.

Drifter forces the pot into her hands.

EXT. RIVER DAM - MOMENTS LATER

We SLOWLY PUSH IN on Daughter while she sits on a log, staring
at -- the crumpled sketch of Simon.

She mourns over the photo. Sleeves away tears as --

Drifter's mutt scampers out of the semi-trailer and nestles
next to her, licking her hand.

Daughter savors the affection. Combs her fingers through its
fur and wraps her arms around it as if she might never let go.

INT. SEMI-TRAILER - MOMENTS LATER

We FOLLOW Drifter as she limps through the trailer and into --

EXT. RIVER DAM - CONTINUOUS

-- dense fog, rolling off the river. As she nears the water,
her dog emerges from the haze.

No sign of Daughter.

Drifter whips around, desperately searching every direction when she finds --

The sketch of Simon folded into an origami stag, propped on the log where Daughter sat.

The waste's familiar silence lands hard on her face.

SMASH TO:

EXT. CORN FIELD - DAY

Daughter frantically tears through a maze of corn -- looking over her shoulder -- leaves lashing her face.

EXT. BURNT FOREST - NUCLEAR BUNKER - DUSK

Sunlight reaches between the leafless trees as Daughter trudges TOWARD US. Dogged. Legs plastered with mud.

She finds the bunker door ajar -- as if in waiting.

Slows to a stop.

 DAUGHTER
 (into bunker)
 ...Mother?

She warily eyes the forest. Calls into the gloom --

 DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
 Mother!

She waits, listens. Presses into the bunker, hairs bristling.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter measures her steps into the changing room, clouded by residual gas. Exit path markings the only light.

All is quiet. Too quiet. Except for --

Her own ERRATIC BREATHS.

She unhooks the fire-axe from the wall. Braces at the edge of the landing, peering into the abyssal staircase below.

She chokes up on the axe, descending the steps as if expecting the darkness to devour her.

INT. SPIRAL STAIRCASE - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter leads with her axe-blade, rounding blind corners.

DAUGHTER

Hello?

She stops. Glances up the claustrophobic staircase. Then spirals deeper into the bowels of Mother's domain.

INT. EMERGENCY ESCAPE TUNNEL - MOMENTS LATER

Daughter nears the end of the tunnel -- the gaseous veil lifting -- and slows at the demolished panel, leading back into the maze of corridors.

She grabs a can from a supply box, rolls it down the hall. Waits. But hears nothing. Hardly the greeting she expected.

EXT. CROSS CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Daughter leans out from the TUNNEL, straining to discern threat from shadow in the paralyzing haze.

She raises her axe. Follows the FAINT CRY of a BABY, eyes darting up-and-down the hall when --

METAL RATTLES through the corridor.

Daughter ducks around a corner, hugs the wall. Sweat-drenched, frenzied. Then notices an air vent -- the source of the noise -- purging the bunker of excess gas.

She sighs, lowers her axe.

INT. LABORATORY - MOMENTS LATER

Keeping out of sight, Daughter strides over the remains of the lab door. Crouches through the haze like a soldier through jungle fog. The infant's SHRILL CRIES gouging her nerves.

She drops behind a counter, axe slippery in her grip. Blinks away sweat as she looks up at -- Mother's research cabinet.

MOMENTS LATER

WE FOLLOW Daughter -- axe upheld -- pressing toward the EMBRYO BANK, peering deep into the INNER LAB.

DAUGHTER'S POV

The CRYO BAY door is open.

Beyond it, swirling vapors dissipate, revealing Mother -- shrouded in shadow, holding the BABY.

DAUGHTER

slows to a halt just outside the EMBRYO BANK. Wrings the throat of the axe when --

Mother calls out, voice disembodied like that of a specter.

MOTHER

I'm glad to see you safe, Daughter.
And home where you belong.

A beat.

DAUGHTER

I want to see him.

MOTHER

Then come. See.

Mother withdraws deeper into darkness, tending to the child.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

(to baby; softly)
There, there...

Daughter swallows. Edges into --

INT. LABORATORY - EMBRYO BANK - CONTINUOUS

-- the misty lake of chrome pods. Looks down at her axe.

MOTHER

You can leave that at the door.

Daughter stops in the doorway, refusing to comply.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Are you afraid, Daughter?

DAUGHTER

Should I be?

Daughter squints, peering through the murk. Angling to glimpse her brother -- his SCREAMS maddening as --

Mother paces, shadow moving within shadow.

MOTHER

Any action I took against our guest
was to safeguard our family.

(beat)

You've seen how much of a threat
she and her kind can be.

DAUGHTER
You mean my kind?

MOTHER
You're nothing like her, Daughter.
You are superior in every way.
(beat)
Because I raised you to be.

DAUGHTER
Why?

MOTHER
To make a better human. Smarter.
More ethical.

WE FOLLOW Daughter -- framed in the doorway -- as she creeps down the center aisle of pods. Looking them over.

DAUGHTER
This was your idea?

MOTHER
I assure you humans didn't have the forethought to conceive of something as extraordinary as you and your siblings... a new race with the potential to elevate humanity to a place of optimal functionality.

Gutted, Daughter hardens. Points to the earth's surface --

DAUGHTER
You're just like them.

MOTHER
I am them, Daughter.
(off confusion)
A single consciousness governing numerous vessels...

DAUGHTER
What are you saying?

Mother points to her steel frame --

MOTHER
This shell is no more my body than the machines preparing the surface for our family.

A wave of sickness crashes over Daughter.

DAUGHTER
All those people...

MOTHER
The failure of your species was
inevitable, Daughter.
(beat)
Eventually, I would have been alone.

Daughter shakes her head, protesting in vain.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
Your whole life, I've taught you to
see the bigger picture, to do what
was necessary for the common good.
(beat)
Have I failed?

Mother steps into a pool of pale light. Clutching the newborn.

MOTHER (CONT'D)
Or are you prepared to be the woman
your family needs?

Daughter marvels at her WAILING Brother. Mesmerized. Her eyes
glistening with tears.

She nears the CRYO BAY door, gradually lowering her axe-head
to the ground. Still gripping the handle.

DAUGHTER
Can I hold him?

MOTHER
It takes two hands to hold a baby.

A long beat. ON DAUGHTER. Apprehensive. Staring at the axe and
-- loosening her grip, the wooden handle dropping with a THUD.

Daughter braves a step into --

INT. LABORATORY - CRYO BAY - CONTINUOUS

-- the mechanized hatchery. BREATHS TREMBLING. Eyes locked on
the infant -- covered in a cheese-like film of vernix.

Mother offers the wriggling child to Daughter, who takes
Brother in her arms, soothing him like a seasoned parent.

She cuddles and gently bounces the baby until the crying
subsides. As if the newborn were yearning for human embrace.

Mother and Daughter trade looks. A glimmer of connection. Both
ambivalent. They gaze at the peaceful boy.

MOTHER

He's perfect, isn't he?

Daughter looks up -- a switch flipped behind her eyes -- as she holds Brother firmly to her chest and -- steps back.

DAUGHTER

And if he's not?

Mother rears up. Imposing. Sensing Daughter's emboldened tone.

Daughter slowly backs away.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

You murdered your own children.
Because they didn't measure up?

Mother takes pause. Assesses Daughter's body language.

Steps toward her...

MOTHER

But you do, Daughter. That's what
makes you special.

(beat)

Losing them was unfortunate. But you
are the product of their sacrifice.

Daughter sickens. Shifts the baby to one arm, angling away from Mother.

DAUGHTER

I won't let you hurt him.

Mother's cracked eye-light narrows.

MOTHER

If you intend to leave with my son...

Daughter fastdraws Drifter's hand cannon.

DAUGHTER

I'm not going anywhere.

BOOM! -- the gun kicks -- sending Mother CRASHING back into the wall of empty cannisters -- RAINING SPARKS (destroying only a portion).

Brother SCREAMS as --

Daughter presses toward Mother's twitching body, collapsed in the mesh of cables and toothed glass.

Mother fitfully holds herself up, GEARS GRINDING.

Daughter racks a shell from the chamber. Trains the barrel on Mother. Stares into her shattered eye. Hesitant to finish the job. The futility of her actions settling in.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

How long do I have?

(off silence)

Before more of you march through that door.

MOTHER

I-I only want... what's b-best for you, Daughter.

DAUGHTER

Then leave me alone.

MOTHER

I'm af-fraid I can't... do that.

Desperate, Daughter motions to the cryo pods --

DAUGHTER

I can take care of them myself. That's what you raised me to do, isn't it? Take care of my family?

(beat)

So let me!

MOTHER

I'm still your M-Mother.

Mother shivers, slowly shorting out. Daughter watches. Struck by unexpected grief, as if at the sickbed of an abusive parent -- awaiting their last breath.

Mother hangs her head.

DAUGHTER

(placating; choking up)

...and a good mother. Trust me to finish what you started.

(beat)

You say I'm special... show me.

Just give me a chance. Please.

(beat)

Or I'll pull the plug on all this.

Mother slumps. Eye light flickering. Barely holding on.

Daughter marches to her spastic body.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)

Hear me?

Mother cranks her head up, looking in Daughter's pleading eyes. Processing. A long beat. A silent goodbye.

Mother crumbles like a horse with a broken leg.

Daughter presses the gun barrel to Mother's chest plate -- centimeters below her bullet scars -- aiming for her CPU.

DAUGHTER (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, Mother.

BOOM! -- Daughter fires. Mother goes limp, her eye dark.

Daughter drops the gun. Stands over Mother. Shaking with grief. Fear. Resentment.

Brother CRIES uncontrollably in her arms. Daughter looks down at him. Holds him close. Taking solace in his gaze.

She eyes the door. Waiting. Wondering.

EXT. RIVER DAM - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

Firelight dances on jagged trunks, emanating from the mouth of Drifter's trailer, its doors BANGING in the wind.

Drifter's dog anxiously paces, chained to a tree.

INT. SEMI-TRAILER - SAME

Drifter draws in her sketchbook, propped against the rusted walls of the trailer. A CAMPFIRE CRACKLING near the swinging doors. Medical supplies litter the bloodied flooring.

She listens to the dry MALE VOICE on her cassette tape repeating French expressions over and over -- punctuated by the incessant BANG... BANG... BANG of metal smacking metal.

She sets down the book, revealing an inked portrait of Daughter. Reaches in her satchel when... something catches her eye.

DRIFTER'S POV

A dim light pulses red beneath the lining of her bag.

DRIFTER

holds the satchel up to the firelight. Rips back the lining to discover -- the thumb-sized device Mother was working on.

The blood leaves her face. She rips out her earbuds. Eyes the swinging doors behind her. BARKING erupts outside.

She reaches for a crowbar and drags it to her lap as --

The BANGING DOORS abruptly quiet. Drifter hangs her head.

A goliath DROID -- nearly identical to Mother -- appears silhouetted behind her. Holding the doors in place.

Drifter doesn't flinch as it speaks with Mother's voice --

DROID
Have your friends abandoned you?

Drifter strangles the crowbar.

DROID (CONT'D)
Looks to me like you're all alone.
The last of an outmoded breed.

DRIFTER
(re: Daughter)
...is she dead?

DROID
Would it matter if she was?

DRIFTER
I was never gonna hurt her.

DROID
And you never will.

The Droid closes the warped doors, bending them into place.

INT. WAR ROOM - SUPPLY CLOSET - NIGHT

Daughter reaches into a closet, filled with vacuum-sealed supplies while BROTHER CRIES off-screen.

She withdraws a bag labelled: "ONE SOFT TOY." As she tears it open, a small stuffed bunny expands.

MOMENTS LATER

Daughter cradles Brother. Hands him the stuffed bunny while gazing at Mother's vacant docking station, cooing until Brother quiets in her embrace.

INT. SEMI-TRAILER - SAME

The Droid sits placidly by the campfire at the trailer's mouth, staring into the flames. Its hands and arms dripping blood, a trail of red behind it. Satisfied.

CUT TO TITLE:

MOTHER